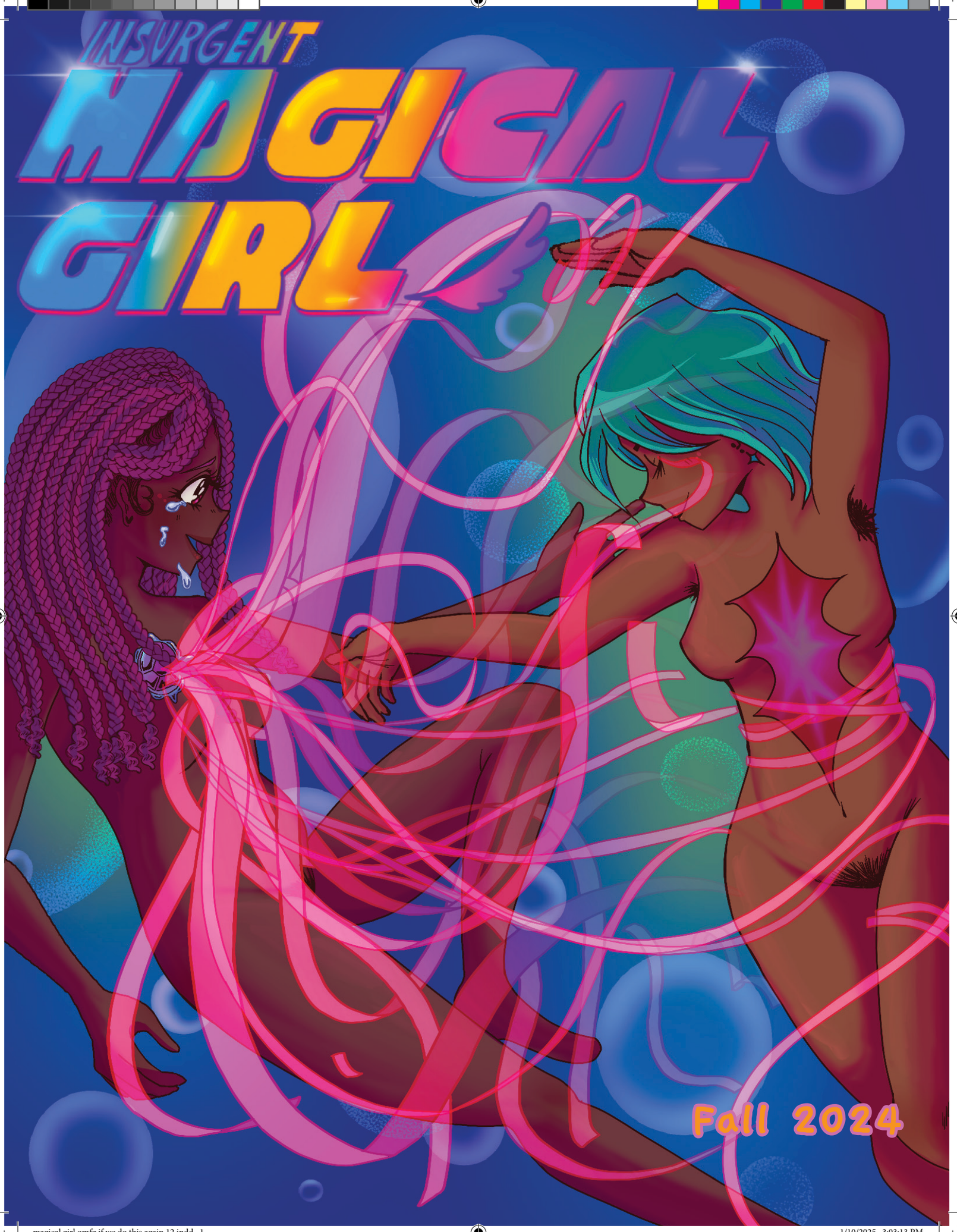

magical girl omfg if we do this again 12.indd 1 1/10/2025 3:03:13 PM

LETTER FROM THE COLLECTIVE

Some days I wish I had bigger boobs. Some days I want to cut my boobs off. Nevertheless, boobs are awesome.
-a herd of ants

Hey all! I'm losing my entire mind right now! I am so busy, I am so stressed, I am in about 6+ meetings per week on average organizing, and I'm about 2 more meetings away from having lost every single one of my marbles. Though, the work is good work to do, and I love the work I'm doing. I don't just love it, it's necessary work, someone must do it. Do what you can to provide for your community and fight for what is right, if you take up action and just start helping you'll be doing an incredible, phenomenal thing. Maybe then people like me won't have to take on so much work that way, and I won't have to be in a million bajillion meetings every week. Every pair of hands is worth something, yours too, especially yours. Please use them, and not just because I'm here complaining to you, but because it is the human thing to do. Love my work, love my life, love your community, and love you all.
Sincerely and tiredly,
steg

I love women and femininity omgggggggg But on a serious note, magical girl media makes me feel like being a girl is something that is beyond a social construct. The exploration of emotion, of self, others around me and of humanity are tropes that are in magical girl media and that is something that is obviously relatable. I hope to stay a magical girl, have all those traits be part of me.
(:3) - alexa Cruz abarca

I've always had traditionally femininely-aligned interests, albeit sometimes with an "emo" bent... but I've always unapologetically liked makeup and dress-up and glitter and pink. I truly love being a girl, and feeling like I'm part of this wonderful in-group of people that understand my seriousness when I talk about my continuing love of the Barbie movies from my childhood, or that notice when I do my hair.
Though I'm not ashamed of my feminine interests, I have to say that I do feel more "cool" and "serious" when I enjoy things that are viewed as more traditionally masculine. If I wanted to impress someone, I'd rather tell them about the sci-fi novels I've been reading than the fact that I picked up knitting... and I feel much more proud of owning the Saw 8-film Movie Collection on DVD than the combined 10+ Barbie, My Little Pony, and Strawberry Shortcake movies I also have on DVD.
I know that the pitch of my voice or my height or the amount of makeup I wear can affect how seriously I am taken; the difference between my emotions being seen as justified, or considered frivolous tantrums. And it's hard to know how much any lack of respect I get is because people don't take me serious as a person, or because they don't take me serious as a woman.
~ Rebecca :D

growing up, i remember that often times, what was considered "cool" was associated with masculinity and boyhood. "boy things" were "cool," "girl things" were "cute." i feel like i had a wide interests, but i used to be embarrassed that i liked girly looking back though, if these medias brought me joy, wha that?
and now here i am, in college, where (after years of pond i'm actually genderfluid, not a woman. THAT BEING SAID girlhood. although i don't talk to the girls i played dolls ago, we were girls together, and that was all that ma relationship with femininity may have fluctuated ov am proud of all the things i've liked, past and ly littlest pet shop, pillow pets and zhu zhu care bears, my little pony, and monster

Ponysonas by: Alexa Cruz Abarca

magical girl omfg if we do this again 12.indd 1 1/10/2025 3:03:19 PM

As I grow older, I have a growing appreciation for my menstrual cycle. When I was young, my period was a monster, the absolute worst part of living. I shed tears when I learned I would menstruate for the rest of my life, and once I began my period, I sobbed monthly at the woes of permanently possessing a bleeding uterus. Pads felt like diapers, every time I wore one I was sure the whole room could see and smell it. And TAMPONS- ajdskhflkjhewiual. However, now that I am older, I live my life in relation to my period, and not as a visceral fear of uncontrollable bodily bleeding, but as a time of release and relief every month. My emotions ebb and flow with my cycle, and the clarity and calm that I feel upon beginning my period is a much needed grounding for my body. The cramps can go die tho.

Umbrella

why are my older brothers lashes so luCiOUS, FULL, RAPUNZALING and QUAKING AVALANCHES opposed to my received gene of eyelash- so much less than his. he is so magical girl. Anyways.. pussy is power.

-indigo

Growing up, I thought anything I was interested in was cool and interesting mostly because I had little to no care for the opinions of others when it came to things I liked. It took me years to get rid of my dollhouse because I enjoyed playing with it. I was told that it was childish (mind you I was still in elementary school). I would recall my uncles still having video game consoles and my dad's obsession with toy helicopters so I was confused as to why I wasn't allowed to enjoy my hobbies. Anyway, I hope that we can get to a point where young girls are allowed to like what they like without people bullying them into giving up their interests and hobbies.

-evewasframed

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girly things!!!
what's wrong with

pondering) i have found tha
SAID- i owe so much to
olls with years and years
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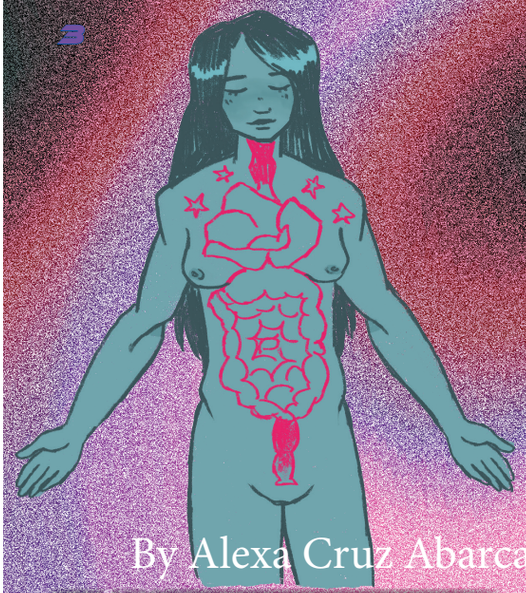
and present. especial-
zhu pets. especially
ster high. ~lynx

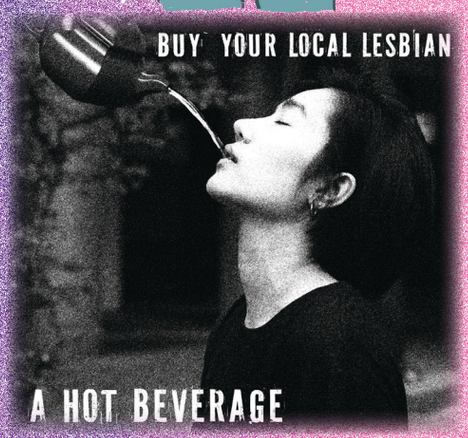
Hello everypony! The Insurgent Editorial Board has GROWN and we are thrilled to present this latest issue: Magical Girl. Our Magical Girl Issue is meant to celebrate femininity and girlhood. Femininity is very beautiful! Whether the interests of girls are socially constructed and thrust upon them, or gravitated to intrinsically, society still associates them with girls and women, and the undermining and stigmatization of femininity impacts those groups of humans, and all humans that participate in femininity. Thus, femininity's origins and agency of displays are not necessarily important in the question of whether or not we should embrace all things girly and all things fun. All pieces in this issue, regardless of whether or not they directly cohere with the theme, are subverting traditional roles of professionalism by propagating through Insurgent. We appreciate all who have contributed to this issue!

welcome to
coolbitchville

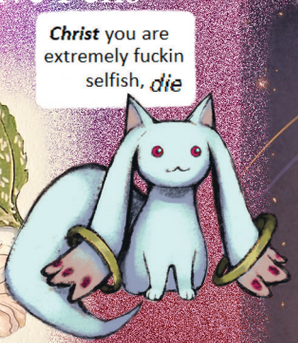


By Alexa Cruz Abarca

By Rebecca Kartchner @ greenish_girl_art on ig



By Twelve Pens



By Layla Eby

By Ilse Spiropoulos
@Iron_Kingdom_Adventures

A Dissarray of Girlhood

Darlin speak to me...

I despise pink, so hyper feminizing
I put all 6 of my stuffed animals away when guests come over- I don't want people to touch my children nor judge
The patriarchy filled my household to unconsciously my brain
Don't cry, that shit's weak asf- but only for me- you? NO! Always feel your feelings!
Raised around boys my whole life- did I even have a girlhood?
Of course. But a convoluted one- as girlhood is.
I liked TinkerBell but never really watched it, guess I just liked the thought of fairies.
A tomboy as a youngin, people would question my gender thru looks and my "boy name".
Hey- why's it even called tomboy. Was Tom fuckin gay and ostracized?
Complex relations with my bosom as a girl then woman, I won't lie- I got a respectable bangin rack since middle school- pero at the cost of slut shaming and people thinking im silly maybe dumb?? RIP to the posture tho...
I have to embrace it, sometimes I 💔 them, sometimes I wanna SLICE THEM OFF: Whether it's to fit into these goddamn tops (made so commonly for the bitty titty community in stitching, neckline, AND stretch), or to be able to RUN from the ops without holdin my chest down...
I feel because of my long hair and chest I can't always express the masculine side of me. There since I was that youngin- family induced tomboy or not. I'm not questioning my identity as a strong independent woman, I have to carry on the legacy of the strong independent ones before me and those to come, to rep the womanhood that never seems to be truly free from oppression and to be a reminder of what a woman can be. But sometimes there's immense pressure and unconfidence to go out, specifically when wearing more "masculine" clothes these days, still looking so hair-ly and chest-ly feminine- for people to think- looka that bitch next to me tryna be a man.
Trust me, I don't want to be.
I ❤️ being a woman! My rights at mens expense→ WHAT'S fuckin new. Old random men telling me to smile→ yes that actually happens. To be assumed a submissive, clueless, can't-get-my-hands-dirty kinda girl→ boy please. That might be some of us, but how dare you assume us all. AND DON'T GET ME STARTED ON THESE POCKETS SIZES IN PANTS AND JACKETS.
But oh to get into clubs for free, have more automatic social trust and be able to climax multiple times without curling into an incapacitated ball after a single nut.
Femininity can be complicated because although I smile and be oh so sweet, little do they know the endless opinions, creations and craved violence behind these big ol' honey glazed, sterling chestnut eyes.
The subjugation and objectification of bodies like mine everywhere I look. I feel for all my little AFABs across the globe and beyond. TO ALL THE babygirlz, you fuckin own this shit. You're so unique and unique is perfect. Shoot for not the stars but the fuckin 11th dimension and know I got your back.

~Tyler

Chibi Ty by: Alexa Cruz Abarca
Background by: Alexa Cruz Abarca

MODELS:

Sara Omer

Anastasia Irvine

Sam Wolkstein

Ferris Haukom

Alexa Cruz Abarca

MAGICAL GIRLISM

photos by Ella (ig @_photosbyella05)

MY LITTLE GENDER TROUBLE

BY DORIAN BLUE

ART BY: ALEXA CRUZ ABARCA

The closet I came out of had a door made of particle board and glass sides. When I kicked it down, no one in my life was that surprised. I looked for queerness wherever I could find it in my suburban environment. When it didn't satisfy, I became my own exemplar. I was embracing the fact that I wasn't straight, but questions about my gender made me feel exposed. They knew that I wasn't one of them. In their book Gender Outlaw: Next Generation, Kate Bornstein says that "we just want to identify the "real" freaks, so we can feel closer to normal. In reality, not a single one of us is so magically normative as to claim the right to separate out the freaks from everyone else. We are all freaks to someone. Maybe even—if we're honest—to ourselves." I liked being myself, but I was the visual outlier.

Across the Golden Gate Bridge, I could wander over rainbow crosswalks and take part in the annual Pride Parade. In my small town, I stuck out. There was no way around it. Short hair shouldn't have set me apart so much, but every other girls' long, ponytailed hair did the work for me. The adults around me had trouble believing my isolation at first, but they gradually grew more attuned to it. I would come home to parents that loved to hear about my interests, but be stuck in school with people who could barely hold back their distaste for me. I was just too easy of a target for them to ignore.

I had never wanted to be a freak to myself, but it became harder and harder not to sink into it. I just wanted to have my short hair, wear my rock t-shirts, and be as foul-mouthed as I pleased. Tomboy, androgynous, masculine. All words thrown around to confine me, but nicer than calling me a lesbo or dyke. Sometimes, that's really what they wanted to say. I could see it quivering on their lips, on their faces as they left me out of everything, or when they glared at me in the changing room. I found a small circle of friends, outcasts in their own ways, and they were all I had. The summer was when I could live with less weighing me down. I didn't have to go to my classes and be stuck with the people who wanted nothing to do with me.

In the summer when I was twelve, I was helping out my dad with his work. I wanted some extra 20s to line my pockets to buy junk food, go to the movies, and get more clothes from Hot Topic. My dad was the IT guy for a Catholic school, but his office was in the basement of the rectory, where the two priests lived. I spent my days pushing software updates on iPads and making sure all the PCs were running the right version of Windows. It wasn't a dank basement by any means. It had large windows, two desks, a bathroom, and a nice carpeted floor. Whenever I had a spare moment, I could go upstairs to the kitchen and make myself a cup of tea.

Once up there, I enjoyed the million-dollar views the house had to offer. The entire property of the school and church was on top of a hill that had a direct view to the San Francisco skyline. If the sky was free of fog, I could enjoy the idyllic view of the Golden Gate Bridge, bay, skyscrapers, and the rolling golden hills. So close that I could almost touch the city and its tolerance.

While my dad and I were having lunch at the dining table upstairs, one of the priests, Father Roger, came to sit with us. He greeted my dad, then said it was so wonderful to finally meet his son. There was an awkward silence for a beat.

"That's my daughter actually," my dad said.

The priest's eyes became saucers of shame. He stuttered out several apologies in quick succession, but I assured him everything was fine. I looked anywhere but his eyes, glancing down at my pad thai, then at the gray, wind-whipped water of the bay. As awkwardness hung in the air, I tried not to laugh. It was one of the first times in my life that I had even interacted with a priest, and he was wracked with guilt over me.

Father Roger then told us a story. Back when he had been a "long-haired hippie," he had been mistaken for a girl a few times. That image of him alone, given his clerical straightlaced appearance, made up for everything that had happened. His cropped brown hair, going gray, had once flowed over his shoulders while he donned floral ponchos. He had gone to Grateful Dead concerts, doing God knows what kinds of substances, all before repenting. We all left the lunch off on a good note. The next time he saw me, I only saw a trace of unease on his face.

I was perfectly happy with how I looked. Hair length was my vehicle for serious gender mischief. As my resolve strengthened, I lost a part of myself. I had to be on guard, ready to field peoples' confusion over me, push back if they decided to be nasty about it. I never wanted to wear skirts or dresses because that would have meant they won. I would have lost my edge in the performance I had fought so hard for. Pushed from one mold to another. I couldn't be half-queer, half-tomboy. It was all or nothing. If I dressed more like one of them, it would be pathetic. To be unexplainable is a blessing. I refuse to bear it as a curse. Gender is a performance I want to participate in on my terms. No limitations, no reasons to shy away. The questions and interrogative gazes I have fielded are worth the headiness of utterly knowing myself.

Revolutionary Girl Utena Review

By: Ivy Meyer

Trigger Warnings: Physical and Sexual Abuse, Rape, Incest
This contains spoilers for the Revolutionary Girl Utena anime.

The Plot

Once upon a time, years and years ago, there was a little princess, and she was very sad, for her mother and father had died. Before the princess appeared a traveling prince, riding upon a white horse. He had a regal bearing and a kind smile. The prince wrapped the princess in a rose-scented embrace and gently wiped the tears from her eyes.

"Little one," he said, "who bears up alone in such deep sorrow, never lose that strength or nobility, even when you grow up. I give you this to remember this day. We will meet again. This ring will lead you to me one day."

Perhaps the ring the prince gave her was an engagement ring.
This was all well and good, but so impressed was she by him that the princess vowed to become a prince herself one day. But was that really such a good idea?

Revolutionary Girl Utena is a Magical Girl Anime by Kunihiko Ikuhara, the same director and writer as Sailor Moon. Utena Tenjou, the aforementioned "little princess", is a 14 years old middle school girl at Ohtori Academy, an elementary through high boarding school. Utena is a new student at the school with the goal of trying to find her prince. Utena defies gender norms, wearing a prince outfit, being uncomfortable engaging in feminine behavior, and dominating in sports against male students. There is a big focus on princesses and princes in this show, with many of the female characters searching for their own "prince".

One day she sees a girl named Anthy being slapped by a member of the student council, Saionji. Anthy is the same age as Utena, she is devoid of life, unable to think for herself or show emotion other than an unhuman happiness with a single friend being a mouse named Chu Chu. The reason Saionji slapped Anthy was because he has a sort of ownership over her. He is the current champion duelist, and Anthy has to be engaged to whoever that person is.

These duels take place in a forest on a flat platform atop a large diagonally spiraling staircase, the shape of a rose, with an ominous castle looming above it, none of which is visible to the outside despite its size; it is all a mirage. Duels are won when a rose is sliced off the opponent duelist's chest to win. They are fought between "the engaged", those with a rose signet like the one given to Utena by the prince, to gain the "power to revolutionize the world" and "eternity", using that power to fulfill their own desires.

Roses are everywhere in this show; each duelist has their own color of rose that represents their character. Their meanings depend on the context and how the rose is portrayed. Generally, they represent love between characters, one's emotions, or their perceived set of events versus reality, and their colors represent the feelings of a character. Utena wins her first duel, uncomfortable with the idea of Anthy being "engaged" to her but defending her when she is in trouble. Utena does not show care for the duels at first, saying they are "pointless" and just "games" as "[she] can't forgive a system that deprives someone of their personal freedom", but is forced to duel challengers to save Anthy from the abuse she has faced prior. Much like real life she's forced into a system where she has no control or power to escape from. The show deals with themes of abuse, love, eternity, gender, sexuality, and girlhood through heavy use of symbols, motifs, magical elements, and repetition.

Student Council Arc

The anime is separated into 3 arcs, the first being the Student Council Arc. The student council receives letters from a figure known as "the end of the world", who created the dueling game to find someone with the power to revolutionize the world. The main characters of the arc are Saionji, the vice president, Touga, the president and the heartthrob of the school who is the same age as Saionji, 17, Miki, 13, a boy who is extremely intelligent, wishing to find someone to play piano with like he once did with his twin sister, and Juri, 16, the fencing team captain. Another prominent character is Nanami, Touga's younger sister, who obsesses over him, she is 13. Age is important to note since the characters appear much older than they really are, and there are many concerning age gaps in relationships.

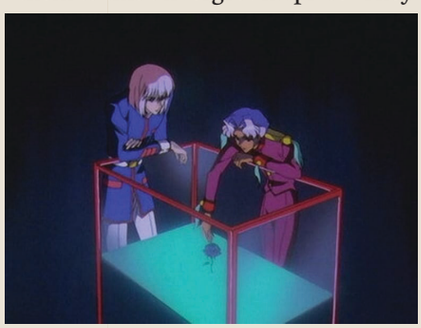
The arc follows Utena taking on the gauntlet of the student council and Nanami, each duel representing a different value for why they are fought, friendship, choice, reason, love, adoration, conviction, and self. Touga is the last to duel Utena, he has been trying to seduce Utena by trying to convince her he was her prince and has been feminizing her by getting her to wear a dress and complimenting her beauty, often causing her to blush out of embarrassment. Utena does not stop Touga's advances but she is conflicted, she is a much younger student, and he is the student council president, he has a lot of perceived power over her. She finds him attractive and endearing, but wants to keep her commitment to her prince. Not giving explicit pushback does not make what Touga is doing okay; the show does a good job to never imply the abuse is justified.

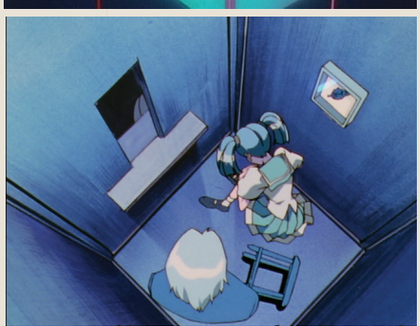
During their duel, Touga defeats Utena after she loses focus, believing Touga might actually be her prince. Utena is crushed by losing Anthy, she wants to get Anthy to be a normal girl again. Utena is bedridden after her loss, returning to school in the Women's uniform. She's told by a friend to take whatever she lost back, and challenges Touga to a rematch, which she wins. This arc serves as a good introduction, showcasing the themes to a lesser extent and allowing you to get to know the characters. There's more comedic moments and episodes that keep you watching before it gets serious. It's not the most interesting arc to watch but it gets so much better the next arc, so it's worth it to keep watching.

Black Rose Saga

The second arc is the Black Rose Saga, which is started off by a recap episode and the introduction of a mysterious man talking about Utena's duels to her prince, who looks similar to the man talking to him. We learn this man is Akio Ohtori, Anthy's brother, and the school's acting chairman, he is at least 18 years old, but likely much older. He lives in Ohtori Tower, the tallest building on campus that has a looming presence over everything. His fiancé, Kanae, is 18 and is waiting to graduate high school to marry Akio.

The arc is introduced by a dark room with a black rose, with Mikage, a genius high school senior talking to his fatally ill friend Mamiya who is 14. The duels fought are still the same, but the duelists are not. The duelists are those who are manipulated into attending Mikage's counseling seminars, where they vent their personal frustrations and jealousies in an elevator that brings them to this underground place. They all have a personal connection to a member of the student council or Akio.





Rose crests are stolen from the corpses of old deceased duelists that are buried underground, the crests have turned black. The power from the black rose corrupts the bearer, acting as a parasite that works for Mikage, focused on killing Anthy to make Mamiya the new rose bride. The dueling arena now has 100 desks with an item connected to the challenger's closest memory on top of them and red outlines of the 100 dead duelists on the floor. When the challengers lose their duel, they lose any memory about the black rose too. After Utena defeats all her challengers, Mikage tries to recruit her to his seminar.

In a flashback of Mikage's past we're told the duelist's desires are achieving eternity. They are trying to escape the prison that is time, to be free from growing up, and free from death. Ohtori Academy has a warped sense of time, which causes idealized memories of the past for many of the duelists, the memories we see of different characters are how they remember events rather than what has really occurred. Akio tells Mikage the rose crest is a symbol of those he's made a contract with to achieve eternity. This reveals how Akio is the one in power of the warped sense of time at the school, the students are all subject to his control. Eternity cannot be achieved without sacrificing those around you, when you are eternal nobody else is.

One scene shows Mamiya's sister, Tokiko returning to the school, looking much older. She mentions how much the school has changed, but how the people in it have not. Akio tells her "So long as they stay in these gardens called schools people will never become adults", now directly stating the school is a prison to the students. Tokiko was there to visit Mamiya's grave, meaning every appearance of him was the delusion of Mikage. There is a woman who tells Mikage how she was attracted to him once, but not the version of him younger than her. Mikage has not aged in years; by gripping onto the memories of his deceased bride, he has attained a form of eternity.

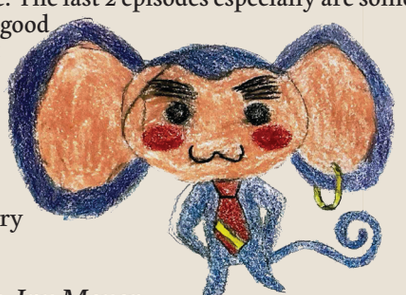
When Utena decides to come to Mikage's seminar, she learns this is where everyone has been manipulated into dueling Utena. She punches Mikage, with intent on further hurting him until realizing he has a rose crest himself, challenging him instead. After Utena wins her duel against him, Akio tells Mikage how he's had time stopped for him, and that he's been taking advantage of him, that now he can graduate and grow up since he is no longer useful to him. Akio is behind the duels, and has complete control over Anthy. After Mikage is left free, everything returns to normal, as if the events from this saga never happened, though they did.

This arc starts to ramp up the story, and ventures into darker themes, starting to reveal the scope of Akio's control over the school. Anthy is shown leaving Utena's dorm at night to visit Akio multiple times. Akio sits on his couch seductively and says, "Come here, Anthy", as she places her glasses on a table and walks towards him. It's only implied he is having sex with Anthy here, but it becomes very clear that he is later.

When Akio has been alone with Utena, he has been complimenting her beauty, similar to Touga, he tells her "I want you [to] continue being very close to Utena". By complementing Utena's beauty, he is telling her that her value lies in her beauty, rather than her other aspects. Utena finds value in her masculinity and strength, she rejects her feminine side and will always blush whenever complimented in this way. For the same reasons as Touga, she does not push back.

This arc is much better than the last, the ingrained system of manipulation and abuse of the school starts to become apparent. The storytelling is phenomenal, seeing the motivations behind each new duelist was fascinating, and we got to learn more about the motivations and passions of the student characters as a result. The arc follows Mikage's delusion and spiraling. I loved seeing how he was manipulated in the past, and how his delusions have taken control of his life. The last 2 episodes especially are some of my favorites in the whole series, seeing him spiral and realize his delusion was a very good conclusion to the arc. This arc was mostly filler before the major events of the show, but it's very interesting to watch, as Mikage's monomania for Mamiya acts as a mirror to Utena's fixation on her prince, which has caused her to become deluded into believing Akio may be her prince.

This is when the show starts to become really interesting, when I begin becoming very excited to find out what will happen next. So much happens at the end of each arc that it's a bit hard to follow, but the following episode is always a recap with an additional story which helps ease the transition of arcs.



Chu Chu by: Ivy Meyer

Apocalypse Saga

The third and final arc, the Apocalypse Saga, opens with Akio driving his car with Touga, and Utena and Anthy moving into Akio's home from their dorm. Akio has no other family, so he wanted to live with his sister, but did not want to separate her from Utena either. He has now successfully lured Utena into living with him.

The duels are fought against the student council again, who are accompanied by their own 'Rose Bride', the love interest of the duelist (if there is one) riding around the perimeter of the arena in a duplicate of Akio's car, with many cars protruding from the ground as well. When the duels are over the car crashes and blares its horn, symbolizing the end of their relationship with the duelist. The sequence before the duels has changed too, one aspect is Anthy's school uniform is seen on the ground, and slowly in it grow pink roses, as if being with Utena has fulfilled her, given her character and personality. Throughout the saga, different people are lured into Akio's car by Touga who asks them if they can "hear the sound that races through the End of the World".

Akio's car is a metaphor for sex, sex is how he controls people, how he maintains his power, and it is now shown he is having sex with Anthy. While Utena has wondered what she is up to at night when she's gone, she has been being raped by Akio. Previously Anthy has complied to his demands but in the 1st episode of the saga, she shows fear and restraint, she starts to act as a human now, she shows more real emotion, and as if she is falling in love with Utena.

It's revealed Akio is both "the End of the World" and Utena's imagined prince. He rescued her from her coffin by showing her something "eternal". As Akio's comments towards Utena become more flirtatious, Utena starts to find him attractive, but questions the morality of both his actions and what she feels, "Should the chairman really say things like that?", "(Idiot! What are you thinking?!)", and "Something definitely is wrong with me…" all reveal that she knows these desires from both sides are wrong but is scared to do anything. Even if she knows it's wrong, she is much younger, she is living with him, and he is the school's chairman, there is not much she can do. She feels absolutely powerless, Akio is pure evil, he has no morals.

A 3-branched candle is used to represent Utena's masculinity, with each wick slowly getting blown out the closer Akio gets to Utena, with the final one getting blown out when she realizes she actually loves Akio. Around Akio she is incredibly uncomfortable, she finds him attractive, but is very tense around him, she leans back when he leans in to kiss her, doesn't have an appetite to eat, constantly stutters, and completely freezes up in his presence.

Utena asks Anthy if it's wrong to love somebody you shouldn't, which Anthy tells her no, thinking about her own love for Utena, something seen as taboo at the time. When asked if she likes someone, Anthy says yes, her prince. Anthy has fallen in love with Utena, but Utena's feelings are elsewhere at the moment.

Utena still recognizes the immorality of Akio, "Akio, you're… a real playboy, aren't you?" "You don't act like a school's chairman. You seem almost… dangerous" but continues to fall for him despite this. Later on, various circumstances result in Nanami staying with Utena and Anthy. Akio tells Nanami straight up "My dream is to turn the Chairman's Residence into a harem" then "just kidding", but it's clear he was not. The 3 decide which 2 get to sleep in the bed through rock paper scissors, which Anthy purposefully loses to protect Utena and Nanami knowing what would happen to them. When Nanami gets up to go to the bathroom during the night, she discovers Akio on the bed with a naked, lifeless looking Anthy, which causes her to run away traumatized.

What proceeds this is the most difficult to watch part of the show, as the events of the saga are recapped, in between is scenes of Akio driving his car, answering the phone to a game show and scenes of Utena in more feminine and casual clothing talking to somebody. She talks about very normal things, rambling on and on switching from one subject to another without a response. Additionally, she is stretching a lot, to an extreme extent, almost like a contortionist. Utena stretches as a nervous response, and her extreme movement shows how uncomfortable she is feeling at the moment. What is shown next is Utena in bed looking up at Akio after she had been sexually assaulted by him. This made my heart sink to my stomach when I first realized what had happened. I always knew it was coming, but no amount of preparation made this hurt any less. Utena looks incredibly uncomfortable and tries talking about what to make for lunch the next day. Even when she is unable to think of anything else to say, she repeats herself to get her mind to think about anything else, to not think about what's just happened to her. She's unable to make eye contact with him, and begins spasming. The episode is from Akio's eyes, what he sees, and Utena was with Akio in his car the whole time. "I never expected we'd end up doing what we did. All I came to do today was deliver roses" she says, she is unable to make sense of what happened to her, she clearly regrets what happened, but she is horrified to relive what she did or confront her emotions about it.

Anthy is also revealed to be the one that sent Utena to go with Akio and the roses by Akio, but note Anthy is controlled by Akio. As Akio attempts to assault Utena again, she refuses his advances, and a flashback shows the real events of her prince. Dios found her alone in her coffin, and she followed him out of it. She learns Anthy is a witch subjected to constant agony as punishment. Dios used to be the only prince in the world, a prince to everyone, expected to save every little girl. While in his house, he convulses as a horde of people surround his house demanding his help. Anthy tells him to lie down and rest, and tells the people he is her prince alone, to which she is stabbed by hundreds of their swords and pitchforks. "she was the only one who truly loved him", but that did not matter.

Dios is "no longer the prince she knew", but now "the End of the World", Dios is Akio, but they are different, Akio is not Utena's imagined prince. Young Utena tries saving Anthy from her suffering, begging Dios to do something, to which he responds, "The only one who can save her now is a prince she can believe in", this is what made Utena vow to become a prince, to save Anthy. Utena never had a prince, she had a false memory of what happened, she is the prince that is meant to save Anthy, her ring guided her to Anthy, not to her prince. Anthy is waiting for Utena to recognize that she has to be the prince to save Anthy. Akio recognizes this too, so he feminizes Utena to prevent her from saving Anthy, she can't be a prince if she is so feminine. He has been stripping her of her

masculinity, Juri says to Miki "[Utena] looks like a girl to me now", they've both noticed how much has changed recently, which can only mean someone is close to achieving the power to grant the world revolution.

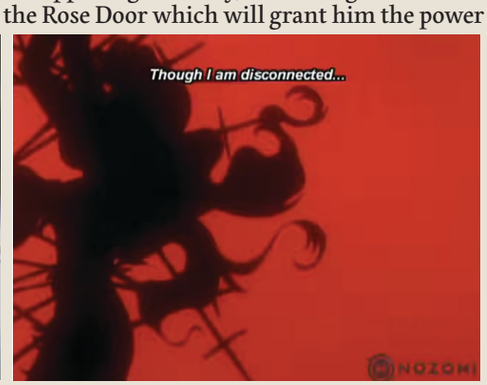
Utena fights one last duel against Touga to be granted this power, which she wins. Touga tells her to not "let [her] guard down around the End of the World or the Rose Bride". After the duel at night, Utena wakes up to find Anthy not next to her, which has happened before, but she goes to find her this time, discovering her sleeping with Akio, and makes eye contact with Anthy. In the morning, Utena takes off her ring for the very first time, she feels betrayed by both Akio and Anthy. Akio questions why she is not wearing her ring a few times, offering to buy her a new ring "more suited to [her] new look" and compliments her more feminine clothing, noting "You seem very girlish tonight" which confuses Utena as she does not understand what that means. Anthy tells Utena "In the end, all girls are like the Rose Bride",under a patriarchal society girls are subjects to those who feel sexual desire for them and forced into a submissive role to the extremes of Anthy by those same people.

One scene shows Anthy and Utena enjoying tea and cookies alone, talking to each other about the future. They have been unable to interact like this for a long time as Akio has always been between them. While uncertain what they'll be in 10 years, they both agree to have moments like these in the future, as they interlock one of their hands. Utena has always suppressed her love for Anthy, because of her commitment to her prince, but here it's clear she does have feelings for Anthy. This scene is juxtaposed with the next one being Anthy on top of Ohtori Tower, looking over the edge, trying to build the courage to jump off. Anthy is saved by Utena right as she jumps off, yelling at Anthy about the promise she just made. It then skips to Utena deciding she is ready to meet her prince and puts her ring back on.

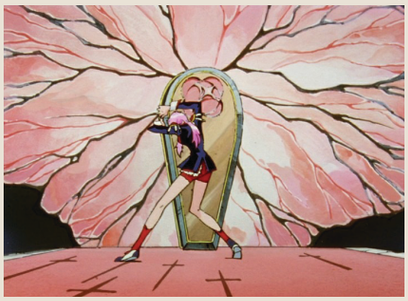
As the finale begins, Utena goes to the dueling arena and is met with Akio who tells her he is her prince, and Utena is transformed into his rose bride when he takes a sword out of her. Akio promises her eternity, and happiness with him, but Utena can only question what would happen to Anthy if she accepts his offer. A flashback to the scene where Anthy attempts suicide reveals why she did, the pain she experiences is part of being the rose bride, but the pain she's caused Utena was not, she claims she has used Utena's naivete to manipulate and cheat her, but Utena apologizes for not realizing the pain Anthy was in earlier, Utena is under the impression she was using Anthy for her own ego of being a prince. Remembering this causes Utena to steal Akio's sword from him. This is where Utena loses her feelings for Akio, she remembers she is Anthy's prince and has to save her. Akio reveals to Utena that her prince, and the castle only were illusions, and reveals "reality" to her, this is where the duels have really been. The arena features all sorts of callbacks to the rest of the show, things from almost every episode, which was really cool to see. The castle above the arena was Akio's room, he has been watching over the school to control it, no place is higher than it, he can observe everything from his room. His observatory served as a projector to manipulate and control the school. Akio uses his projections to manipulate the events that happened, he tries to manipulate Utena into believing she is at fault for having sex with him knowing he is engaged, attacking Utena for what she's done, and denying his abuse, he believes he's the victim as he is no longer a prince. This is a common tactic of abusers to shift the narrative into making them seem like they were the one who was abused, and that the victim is at fault.

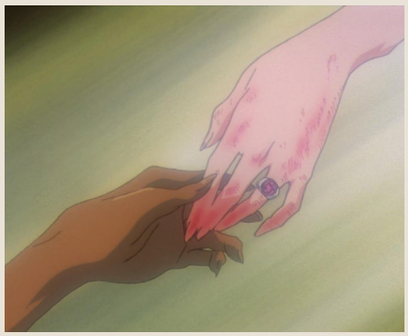
As Utena is dueling she says "I will be a prince" which causes Akio's eyes to widen, and the illusions to crumble, Utena quickly gains the upper hand in the duel, and Akio shoves Anthy towards Utena. With Anthy behind Utena facing Akio, Anthy is wide eyed in both astonishment and fear, but her eyes soften as she leans on to Utena's shoulder and shoves a sword of her own into Utena's back causing her to fall to the ground. While Anthy loves Utena, she also loves Akio, he is her brother after all. Anthy does not know what will happen if Akio is defeated, all she knows is her pain and suffering. She believes her sacrifice for Dios would be for nothing if Akio is defeated. Eternity cannot be achieved without a sacrifice. Anthy believes someone needs to suffer for her actions, and if Utena wins it would be her experiencing Anthy's pain instead. Anthy was conflicted on what she should do, stabbing Utena was what Akio wanted her to do but not for the same reasons. Anthy did it out of love, to save Utena from the suffering Anthy believed she would face. Anthy returns Akio's sword to him, and she is teleported into the air, as 1 million swords fly at her, she is taking on the pain "in place of the prince" as Akio says.

Utena can only watch in horror as she sees what is happening to Anthy, screaming her name as she grips the ground to move herself towards Anthy. Akio is now free to open the Rose Door which will grant him the power to revolutionize the world, each swing of Akio's sword at the door causes Utena great pain, as if she is the door. But through all her pain, Utena's love for Anthy supersedes. Utena is going to free her from her suffering, no matter what the consequences are. She uses what little strength she has left to force herself to stand and bring herself to the door. Akio's sword breaks on the door, causing him to temporarily give up, he tells Utena she won't be able to open it if he can't, but she does not care. With just her hands she begins attempting to open the door. She begins to cry and says the only time she's ever been truly happy was with Anthy. The swords have stopped flying at Anthy, and the door has become a coffin. The door was Anthy's heart, only Utena was able to truly grasp it, only she could open it. Utena begins opening the coffin, and Akio yells at her to stop. Inside the coffin is Anthy, Utena begs her to grab on to her hand to get her out of the coffin.



As they hold on to each other's hands Utena is too weak to pull her out of the coffin, their hands lose grip of each other, and Anthy falls into an abyss as the swords are all redirected at Utena, and the dueling Arena crumbles. The school has seemed to return to 'normal', every character has moved on, and we hear two girls talking about the rumors they heard about Utena. What is most likely is she was hospitalized from her injuries. Anthy visits Akio, who believes he has won, since Utena caused no revolution, and she is being forgotten by the students. Anthy responds to him in an uncharacteristic voice that he doesn't





understand anything, and says she has to go now, leaving behind her glasses. “She isn’t gone at all. She’s merely vanished from your world”, abusers make it seem as if there is no world without them to maintain control over them, Utena has escaped from his world, and Anthy is now doing the same. As she walks out of the school, the bells ring, something that only happens at the end of a duel. Anthy leaves the school in completely new clothes with her suitcase and Chu Chu, pledging to find Utena no matter wherever she is, and exits the school. Anthy has escaped, she is free, she has won. All this time Akio has made it seem Anthy is powerless and has no purpose without him, but Utena is still alive in that very world without him. The ending had all sorts of twists and turns, but I don’t think it could’ve been better. It was not the fairytale ending one would expect, but a more realistic one. Abuse is not something escaped by being saved by someone else, it is you who has to realize your condition and escape it yourself (however, this is something that is not always possible for a victim). Utena and Anthy have now both escaped Akio’s control.

Final Thoughtsf

Almost 28 years later RGU is just as relevant today as it was when it was released, showcasing very relevant themes of today. It’s very forward with its queer and transgender themes. It depicts the manipulation and destruction of character that goes into abuse, it is so authentic. Akio is a realistic, yet untraditional fictional abuser. The female students all find him attractive and charming, he is seemingly nice and caring, and he is not super forceful with his actions, rather, he uses his victim’s naivete to manipulate them into compliance. Utena has nobody to talk to after she was raped, she can’t run anywhere, and she cannot escape her rapist. He’s the only adult figure in Utena’s life, he’s the first person to show compassion to her, he has authority over Utena being her chairman, and living together gives no option for Utena to leave. Magical girl is not just a genre of lighthearted fun and magic, they showcase important issues in unique ways that still feel real despite the fictional elements involved. They place focus on girlhood, and femininity, all the good and bad aspects that come with it. Themes of transformation in magical girl shows also carry a lot of transgender symbolism. Transformations are a new identity to a character, a sort of rebirth as a more ideal version of themselves, very similar to how transitioning serves as a rebirth of one’s self. RGU has aged extremely well, it’s timeless and very ahead of its time. RGU’s explicit themes of gender and sexuality have been extremely influential on many future Magical Girl animes, normalizing featuring themes of sexuality and gender. RGU has greatly influenced or been referenced by shows like Steven Universe, Amphibia, My Little Pony, and Pokémon.

I went into it thinking RGU was going to be a cute show about Lesbians falling in love, with Utena saving Anthy, but it became a harrowing story of abuse. RGU has become one of my favorite shows ever, the writing, comedy, voice acting, soundtrack, art style, characters, and themes are all masterfully crafted. While the events are magical, the characters are very real, the abuse, power dynamics, suffering, and love experienced are all real. You can feel the love and passion Utena has for saving Anthy in both her actions and voice acting. Each character is given a unique and fascinating story to be invested in, characters that have little screen time still get deep emotional stories. I love that this show gives focus to side characters, rather than just being there to duel or help Utena. Despite all the difficult themes, there are many funny moments and episodes throughout the show that serve as a nice relief from all that is going on.

The original songs are all amazing, my favorites are the Rondo-Revolution, Aphrodite of Death, and The Sunlit Garden, these are some genuinely breathtakingly beautiful pieces. The Sunlit Garden especially is a masterfully composed piano piece that really tugs at my heart whenever I hear it. Each of the 21 duels gets their own song too, there was a lot of care put into the soundtrack. Each episode has so much substance and symbolism which makes it quite difficult to understand what is going on at first, but everything falls into place towards the end of the show. The show made a lot more sense to me on my 2nd and 3rd watches and despite being my 3rd time watching RGU in a single term, it managed to stay just as interesting and engaging as my 1st viewing. I was able to notice so much more on subsequent watches, and I’m sure there is still a lot I’m missing, there is so much replay value to this series.

My only complaint is that some repeated sequences and scenes are too drawn out, which is a stylistic choice, but also due to budget constraints, and you can always skip through them. The repetition symbolizes the cyclical nature of abuse, how abuse repeats itself until one can break through it. When Utena broke through the Rose door was when she freed herself from Akio’s abuse. One repeated sequence I really enjoy in particular is the prince monologue at the start. I love how its meaning changes as more is revealed, it seems charming at first, but as more is revealed you question if Utena is remembering things correctly, then when you see Akio for the monster he is, you see how Utena’s young mind idealized events and wish for her to realize the facade created in her mind. There are so many more beautifully written characters, so you should absolutely watch RGU if you haven’t, and rewatch it if it’s been a while since you’ve first seen it. It is complex and confusing at times, but very attention grabbing as you watch more, it just keeps getting better the more you watch it. There are so many plot twists that it’s very difficult to ever predict what is going to happen next. I believe anyone can enjoy RGU, even if you aren’t an anime or magical girl fan, but note the trigger warnings at the start before you do watch. Try to really understand what’s going on so you aren’t left completely lost, it’s not something you can watch passively or without much attention paid to it. It’s free to watch on YouTube, and as a general rule, watch the subbed version. Last thing, shout out to Juri Arisugawa, gotta be my favorite fictional lesbian.

Sometimesforlackofachanceforthoughtthethoughtofanc

By anonymous

"It is the sustained, discrete violence of an incision that is not apparent in the thickness of the text, a calculated insemination of the proliferating allogene through which the two texts are transformed, deform each other, contaminate each other's content, tend at times to reject each other, or pass elliptically one into the other and become regenerated in the repetition, along the edges of an overcast seam. Each grafted text continues to radiate back towards the site of its removal, transforming that, too, as it affects the new territory."

- Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*

"... therefore, the postmodern believes all you can do is quote. There is nothing left to do that's original. Yes, Rick?"
So you're saying there can be no progress?'
Well, not exactly. The postmodernist believes that everything's been done already. Therefore, all you can do is quote, and if you understand that, what that means is that quotation becomes a new art form. The quote itself, within a new context, renders the original text a new discourse. That may sound a little bit confusing, but I think if you really think about that, it will come to you.'
Yeah? Well I've never seen this done before...'
OH MY GOD!!!'
gunshots"

- Brett Morgen, *Too Far From The Norm*

'(All things said before here or there, nothing new)

Tho they might think otherwise, when they say that 'trans women are a threat to women', they do not actually mean 'a threat to this or that particular woman in this or that particular situation'.

They mean, despite not understanding it and not being able to step back and see it, that trans women are a threat to 'women' the gestalt concept that exists in a strict naturalized order with a distinct role and social function in relation to men and the social order, which many of them, being women themselves, have fundamentally staked their claim to social power in, have made their ship in the storm. To put it as an issue of category misses that for them, the ties that bind their sense of place in the world are inextricable from imaging their life itself, and not just their own life, 'humanity' in the broadest abstraction. It's no surprise that this leads structurally to trans women being broadly rendered as sexual commodity, because patriarchy has never really found it difficult to separate that from any sense of personage.

Data' and 'facts' that trans women are not predatory is irrelevant to them, not because of some fundamental belief that men are evil—notice that while a few of them see rightly and fairly see men as predatory, most of them are happy to enable men as much as possible—but rather that they see the very fact of trans femininity itself to be a conceptual, almost ontological violation.
Lesbians used to get this treatment, the 'lavender menace' threatening the woman's movement, threatening the stakes of the investment of woman, threatening something fundamental about the world, but this was quickly displaced. One has to wonder if some of the force of 'cultural feminism' wasn't the fact that it could sell a uniting abstraction that un-monstered and de-threatened lesbians as just extra womanly cottage core social activist care takers, and not unwoman ghostly monsters engaging in a threatening parody of human desire.

The common observation that they punish trans women as whipping girls for the crimes of men and their own internalized self hatred caused by the sex system duopoly is basically accurate, but it misses that the subtle operation that allows that to happen is not due to some mistaken notion that trans women are just perverted men in some misplaced 'misandry' but the way that being monstrous, even being made something spiritualized, is rooted instead in the integrity of the human species as they understand it and the chaotic slippage that would be implied by woman not in such a role, yet not taking the mantel of the false delusional self sufficiency, always ensured by difference and things in their place, that male-ness has. Oppositional sexism has the staying power that it does because it's integrated into a notion of how it sets the terms for what is open to the human.

There is an entire series of feedback loops preventing TME trans people of intuiting complicity with us on the conceptual field, without rendering us into a reduction of 'binary gender' or 'drag queen' or something else- tho, the possibility of such a slippage

Art by Ryland C

nothertousunknownbecomesoursolesourceforresistance

of complicity is not fundamentally impossible, sometimes it happens, but frankly seems to put such persons at a disadvantage socially, or at least, complicates things in life without a clear answer. The answer was structurally prevented.

There is similarly a different series of feedback loops preventing cis queer/sapphic/lesbian/GNC women, from having intuitive complicity. I don't mean to suggest a similar framework by bringing these two grouping up together, merely to say that even amongst people who are in tension with similar structures, there are deeper barriers still. This is also not to say that it is impossible for any actual complicity, I'm not a complete pessimist, but to name that to do so leaves one with little solid ground. For very grounded reasons, very concrete-abstract reasons, it leaves one either a bit of a psychotic, or a mystic, or both.

In queer theory, there is a thing called the antisocial tern, basically the awareness the heterosexuality won't tolerate the integration of The Gays except as in service to society or as a heterosexual parody, because they whole notion of heterosexuality is actually deeply tied in with the notion of The Future, which is abstractly equivalent to and invested in hetero reproduction and The Child, creating a situation where The Gays become equivalent with Death. And basically, the antisocial turn takes this and says 'fuck it, fuck society, fuck integration, fuck the future, fuck caring about the bigger picture, let's be death then'.

The problem with this as I see it is its very rooted in this fag gay male centric conception of the underlying structure, and partially itself. The one book series, baedan, that takes this in a radical direction of queer nihilism quickly overcomes the limits on this notion of the gay male anti-social (and also has an excellent critique of the left com communization 'we undo the value form and then there is no more gender because it won't be managed by the capitalist trade in women's bodies' conception, which is truly, such a bold shot to take at a very hopeful possible path out) but even it is nervous about 'biologic and genetic interventions only deepening the nightmare'. The one book in the queer antisocial turn academic canon that addresses this Sex or the Unbearable is 1. bad, 2. insufficient and 3. Almost anxious at preserving the intractability of 'difference' as this primary mode of tension. That issue of the intractability of 'difference' also makes up the whole last book of Judith Butler's gender trouble series both of which curiously echo exactly what conservative fever dreams of a 'half human half animal half robot degeneracy' transgenderified world are seeking to protect the world, by protecting women, from. You can see the exact same dynamic in progressive, radical people, the beauty and cultural humanity and meaning making they invest into difference- and the desire to protect it from 'influence' - the open contempt and hatefulness from the left and the right, of the response to trans women trying to break out of the social role of 'hijra' in India, where social integration of transness has not in fact changed their status as exploitable semi-person, is remarkable for how it also anticipates social contagion- the contagious threat to not just the social but the human remains the same. The social barring of trans lesbian relationships amongst the 5-gender system of the bugis people is just the same.

We could debate if this absence (which is also an adherence) in the queer antisocial turn is just an artifact of who was talking about it (mostly gay cis men, but also and what writing they are drawing from, but also trans masc jack halberstam) I think its 'Gay sex doesn't reproduce, the anus is a grave' isn't quite up to handling what's at stake in sexgender and 'unwomanhood' - because it's not just that they fear a 'overcoming of difference', tho they very much do and very much see that as a part particularly notions of what makes a human and what makes the social but also about what does replication mean what governs its limits? I think there is sometimes something very primally terrifying. Probably obviously I'm thinking here about 'lesbian auto-(re)production', about how reproduction outside the human sphere and hetero process is almost as old a terror as can be, about Lilith birthing endless demons, about social contagions, about 'corrupted' life, about the raw horror of processes far greater than the sensible world one knows coming to intersect with the raw matter of being, of the odd interplay of cosmic horror and nature and the occult and computers and abstract processes that all seem to be a source of terror for infiltrating the human community, of duplicity and inhumanity and living fungibility, of monstrosity, about slime molds as opposed to organ-ized animals, about the weird and eerie quality that exogenous hormones being self directed produce in cis people, about the ways that trans love is rendered as something incomprehensible, about ecological entanglement and 'ferality' and 'civilization' and 'domestication' and 'progress', about alienation but also the alien inside.

It's a common joke that lesbians have got to find a way to reproduce without men.

Which brings up this whole question of humanity and its future and the horizon of trans women's 'liberation' - are we really able to be liberated? Are we perhaps abolishing 'cis-ness'? But what is it that preserves 'cis-ness' as anything at all? Certainly you've noticed how many people who are not of a 'cisnormative gender' fall back on very gender normative perceptions that seem to land trans women in the cross hairs as a problem again and again. To put it plainly, we have a task bigger than just destroying the social, and being its negative tension, we have the task of bringing something into existence that undoes the terms by which the whole topology keeps itself coherent."

- outsideoutsider
https://social.xenofem.me/notice/AoGqRjJLyNJNOV9IaO

Art by Ryland C

POTUS and The Importance of Non-Male Spaces in Theatre and Politics

written by: Aaralyn Reed and the cast of POTUS

(Coming to UO Theatre in Winter 2025!)

I've been doing theatre for 11 years, and in that time it's only become more and more apparent to me that there is a need for stories which are told through the female lens. When people think of the origins of theatre, they tend to think of Greek and Roman and Shakespeare and blah blah blah. It's a very Western/European view of theatre but sure, let's go with that for now. This was a time in which only *men* were allowed to produce, to create, to write, and to act on public stages. Female characters may have been included in these stories, but it was not done with any sort of female perspective within these writings, and these roles weren't even allowed to be played by female actors for a very long time. NOT THAT FEMALE PLAYWRIGHTS DIDN'T EXIST BACK THEN! But were they acknowledged? No.

Although theatre has evolved quite a bit since then, there is still an odd imbalance of opportunities for female actors. Instead of theatre being a male-dominated space the way it was historically, the development of patriarchy—as we know it today—has implemented certain stereotypes and societal expectations upon the general male population that have seemingly, over time, drawn a lot of males away from theatre. It's too feminine, too flamboyant, *too much*. However, this lack of male presence has somehow still resulted in the glorification of males who *do* choose to occupy this space. I can say from personal experience that all of the theatre spaces I have occupied have been female-dominated, causing more competition amongst female actors. It's very common for us to feel hard to be seen while the very few male actors in these departments get more praise, more roles, etc., and most of them aren't even that talented! They don't have to work as hard to be seen, heard, or recognized, and therefore carry on being themselves while the rest of us are held to much higher standards. Now, this isn't to say there aren't *any* talented, hard-working male actors. This is simply to point out how theatre is an artistic space that, somehow, went from one extreme to the opposite as far as male presence, and yet there is *still* an adoration for them!

POTUS is a farce[1], written by Selina Fillinger, that is being directed by Tricia Rodley here at UO this upcoming winter term. It's apparent that the playwright wrote this show with many layers in mind. Performing it directly following the 2024 election is bound to have an impact, which I am very excited to explore as an actor. Another aspect that I'm excited to explore is the reversal of narratives Fillinger has given us to chew on. We as female actors get to combat these ugly things society says about us, while also giving a space for us to *embody* them, humanizing them through the use of comedy. By this, I mean that the characters in this play are intelligent, hilarious, and highly achieved—all traits which society tries to take away or deny of women and AFAB people. At the same time, these characters are emotional, aggressive, and deranged. They fight, they cry, and they insult each other, but find solidarity and comfort in each other just as much. This script gives them the space to encompass all of these things- allowing them to be full complex human beings without input from male-identifying characters. Having this story told strictly from the perspective of characters who all identify as women reiterates that they belong in all spaces, especially those traditionally only occupied by men, in this case both theatre and politics.

I think *POTUS* is an important show to be putting on because there is power in scripts being written by and for female artists. That being said, I don't use the term "female" to create a monolith, but to recognize the collective struggle of those who either identify within this community, or are placed into it through society's perception. This includes cis women, trans women, non-binary and Two-Spirit people who are AFAB and align with the "female" lived experience, and trans men who may not "pass" in the eyes of society (and are therefore misgendered). It's important to recognize what all of these groups have to fight for together, as well as uplifting each other in our individual battles that are tied to intersecting identities. So, my castmates and I are honored to perform POTUS. Whether or not you come and see it, I just really wanted to talk about this show. I hope this piece finds you well, especially if you related to anything I said :)

With love,
Aaralyn Reed / Jean

---

1 a comic dramatic work using buffoonery and horseplay and typically including crude characterization and ludicrously improbable situations

AND NOW, SOME WORDS FROM MY WONDERFUL CASTMATES!

Sydney Baker / Stephanie:

"I'm so incredibly honored and proud to be cast as Stephanie in POTUS. Being a part of a show, especially during these political times, means a lot to me. Putting on this play is like spitting in the face of all those political representatives and the people who voted for them, who believe I and others don't deserve rights as women. Publicly making a scene, drawing attention through comedy, is one of the best ways I can think of to show that we exist, we will resist, and we are worthy, powerful, humans. To finish my writing off, I just want to say that YOU are loved YOU matter. To everyone out there who is at risk of losing your human rights, YOU ARE IMPORTANT. YOU ARE WORTHY. Keep fighting. Even existence is resistance. Thank you <3"

Ocean Demmin-Ferneau / Dusty:

"Something I love about POTUS is how much each character takes you by surprise. Being a comedy, there is humor within the stereotypes played out by each woman, and yet there is more humor in the way they break out of those stereotypes and into multifaceted individuals. My character Dusty is feminine and assumed to be "dumb" or "ditzy" in her introduction, but her revealed experience in conflict resolution and acute political knowledge flips that narrative on its head. Many women and feminine-presenting individuals face discrimination due to assumptions based on appearance or stereotypes. It's important to shake these biases off as a society. Prepare to be surprised by the nuanced perspectives and skills brought to the table by the women in POTUS!"

Zayne Clayton / Margaret:

"This play to me was always important and poignant but now it's a form of rebellion; loud, epic rebellion in a way I never knew art could be and a huge part of me wishes we could travel the country putting this on for people and maybe they would be inspired or at least understand better, but I feel honored to do our three week run at UO"

Bleu Jones / Bernadette:

"My first time reading through POTUS, I was jarred and amazed. This play literally sets the stage for some very important conversations regarding the state of our government and the people who make this country run—those two things not necessarily coinciding. Far too often, the women and people of color who put in the most work to keep our country functioning are afforded the least recognition and reward. This trend is even reflected in the world of theatre, which, despite being a discipline highly associated with women, is a place where far more roles are set aside for white men than women, especially women of color. POTUS forces us to look this issue in the face with a full female/non-male identifying cast brazenly tackling the hypocrisies existing within the US government. However, despite this serious topic, the show is a comedy. While some may think this could potentially come off as reductive— I wholeheartedly disagree. The humor of the show forces you to see these women not through a lens of suffering under the patriarchal system, but of overcoming it with their brilliance, vivacity, and through their sense of community. Every character demands our full attention, both through their flaws and virtues, and it means so much to me that I get to play a role in this brilliant, deeply impactful show."

Being a lesbian was and is a battle. When I look at an "attractive" man my age I do feel a pull, a yearning. It's for comfort, stability, no more questions about my intimacies from strangers, something repetitive where I can turn off my brain forever and give in--the very real pull of docile, complicit womanhood. It's like suicidal ideation, the urge to be domesticated. Its troubled my sexuality for ages, trying to explain this pull towards men. Yet, it was right under my nose. It was kept with my existentialism, my hopelessness, my empty view of my future, my overwhelming will to shut down--They are all one in the same.

Gender expression is nothing but the shell of a human, and by now I can at least conclude that I can be attracted to masculinity, but men? Never. The world spits on me for it. I love humanness, connection, understanding…the most human people I have met knew transness and/or womanhood intimately. They know what each means to them. They know the ways it has affected their daily lives, but men? Never. Men spit on us for our awareness. Men understand none of it, but by now I expect their ignorance. For even my trans brothers and sisters do not understand me. This troubled my identity for ages…and lowered my expectations of the world.

Transition was and is a battle. The world spits on me for it. I have had fellow lesbians shut me out, fellow trans people deny my expression--why? Have I not experienced enough solitude?

The truth is the world is cruel. The world is patriarchal. Unfortunately, the world is men. I spit on the world. I take my humanness, my expression, my shell, my sexuality, and I redefine manhood in my own lens--in my own world. My battle is not over but I see it clear ahead of me now. Men will try and stop me, but nothing can stop a dyke on T.

- Steg

By: Layla Eb

FOR THIS CURRY DISH!!
PSA: people with exquisite tits see every time you look at them. specifically when yall are talking! i get it tho [unless youre a creep]. i ❤ titties too :)
uh, hello? eyes up here bud

By Rebecca Kartchner @ greenish_girl_art on ig

my LITTLE PONY
Pinkie Pie: Art baddie on top of party pookie, Pinkie Pie is perceived as simple as that but she loves philosophy and is as smart as Twilight, moved into their aunt's house to pursue a higher education. Dominican Republican baddie, genderqueer and pan. I can totally imagine her and Rainbow Dash doing drag looks together and planning out shows!
Sunset Shimmer: ANOTHER IT GIRL! Chicana, second generation bisexual girl! She was a mean girl in middle school but it was def the youtube videos of whatever makeup guru was spitting but has done self reflection. Does tarot readings on her friends and carries a spell jar on her for good luck, has a crush on twilight but doesn't know how to ask people out!
Rarity: OMG she's a hyper femme lesbian and she is THE IT GIRL. People may say she's vapid or mean but she's so raw and real. Came from a working class family and raised Sweetie Bell, that's how she learned how to sew and thrift (not as good as Fluttershy though). Chinese Mexican baddie. I say that her and AJ are dating but if you're anti that... at least exes who felt pressured to date but on great terms.
GIJINKA BY: ALEXA CRUZ ABARCA

Applejack: AJ is someone who is ass with tech, genuinely thought you could download more RAM. Aside from that, her butch mullet is a new development because Rarity fucked up his haircut. From a young age everybody knew she was a lesbian but before that, they knew he could FUCK UP BAKING.

Twilight Sparkle: Biracial and bi! Black and Sri-Lanken, studious in a 2014 tumblr way, adores women so much but men are the only ones who have fallen for her... at least she thinks so. Def so geeky and knows the lore of shit that is considered cringe, still uses Tumblr.

Rainbow Dash: Ti-nikling champion and does so many sports it's so cool if you can swallow their gloating. In middle school Rainbow Dash was for sure that kid that wore neon yellow from head to toe and showed shitty memes from pinterest or on Google Image search. Gender fluid champ!!

Fluttershy: She's a thrifting expert and town petsitter. She's proud to be Jamaican and transfemme! She probably has pics on her instagram from 2016 when she had a silk press emo fringe but her mom didn't allow her to wear black so she's wearing navy religiously.

"I want to erase the tears of all who trusted in hope"

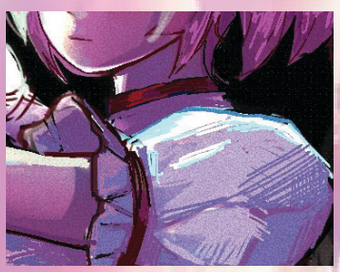
By: Umbrella

MAGICAL GIRL MANIFESTO

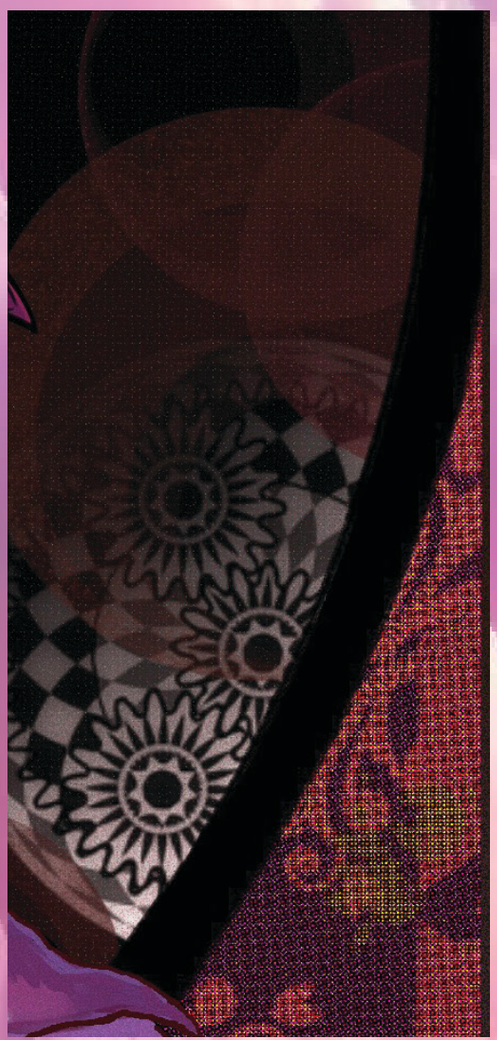
Preface

All the dinosaurs in Jurassic Park are female. No choice but lesbianism? Therefore Jurassic Park is Magical Girl. Watch Jurassic Park!

"If you ever feel like dying to help the universe, just let me know. I'll be waiting." – Kyubee (Puella Magi Madoka Magica)



It is necessary that girlhood be destroyed for a woman to emerge; destruction of the certain essence of girlhood is a prerequisite for womanhood. A boy evolves into a man. Girlhood must be disrupted in order to reach a state of social utility that burdens the state of womanhood, a social utility that is most often depicted as motherhood, but manifests as many things based on what society demands. Boyhood, meanwhile, is a natural progression into manhood.



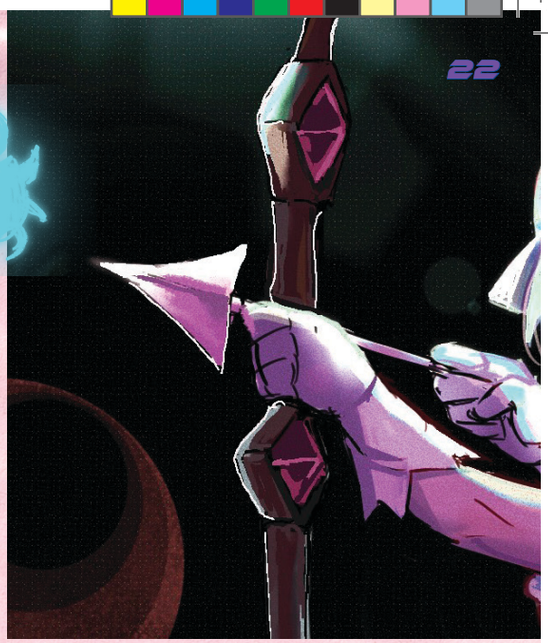
"Someone has to be cursed to balance out a wish for someone else's happiness. That's how we, magical girls, work." – Sayaka Miki (Puella Magi Madoka Magica)

Prior to the maturing of a being, a child believes themselves, to an extent, to be the center of the universe, and their own emotions to be the most instrumental in their own lives. I believe this to be true to both girls and boys, for although society finds this to be less true in girls, especially when a girl is an older sibling, this is because, socially, "girlhood," is a physically set age range of adolescence, so patterns and behaviors that I would subscribe to the death of the girl and the birth of the woman are rather incorporated into "girl" behavior and expectation. However the scientific girl is not the girl I seek to discuss.

I believe girls exist for their own self, their own happiness, and girlhood operates in a separate world revolving around the self-identity of the girl. However women, as a mass majority, accept themselves as the "second sex", the "other" of the self-identity which is the positionally of man[1]. Perhaps not directly with these terms nor radicalism, however it becomes a clear given with age that this is a man's world, or at the very least, a world constructed for the idealized man. And with this identity, it is accepted that at one's own expense, at one's own abandonment of self-identity, self-worth, and dreams, the true self, the true center, the man, and hence mankind, will progress.

Society grapples with the concept of women also being girls, because girls still hold this self-identity and still believe the world is built for them. When maturing into a man, boys do not need to cast away this schema of being the humanized self in society because, growing into men, they are still the humanized sex, thus they can still practice certain aspects of, and to an extent embody boyhood, while still being a man. On the other hand, the girl must shift her scope into being the other.

1 Whether or not phrased clearly, try reading every "self" and grammar iteration of that word in the De Beauvoir type of way.
This whole manifesto takes massive inspiration from her "self" vs "other" concepts in The Second Sex, 1949.



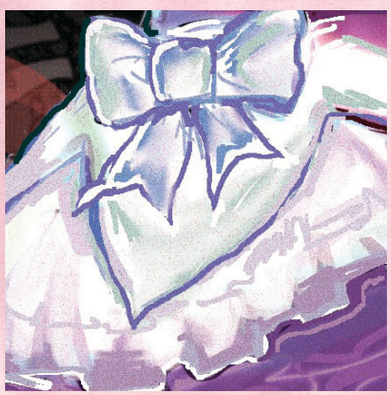
"In our culture, the phenomena known as emotion is considered a mental disorder." – Kyubee (Puella Magi Madoka Magica)

The male body is the norm, thus natural phenomena traditionally associated with the female body are considered to be additions to the essence of a normal body, and quickly medicalized as such, e.g. periods, childbirth, and conditions more commonly found in women like hysteria or anxiety[2]. More fundamentally, pure emotions that are merely felt by those socially catalyzed as girls (instead of boys), such as desires or passions, are otherized, turned into foolish spectacle, and mocked.

On passion and desire, no world of interest is more disrespected than that of the teenage girl. The socially induced interests of boys – cars, sports, dinosaurs – all have respectable real world fans. Meanwhile interests of girls – fairytale stories, clothes, and whatever else that is associated with the passions of young girls, is quickly incorporated into cringe culture.

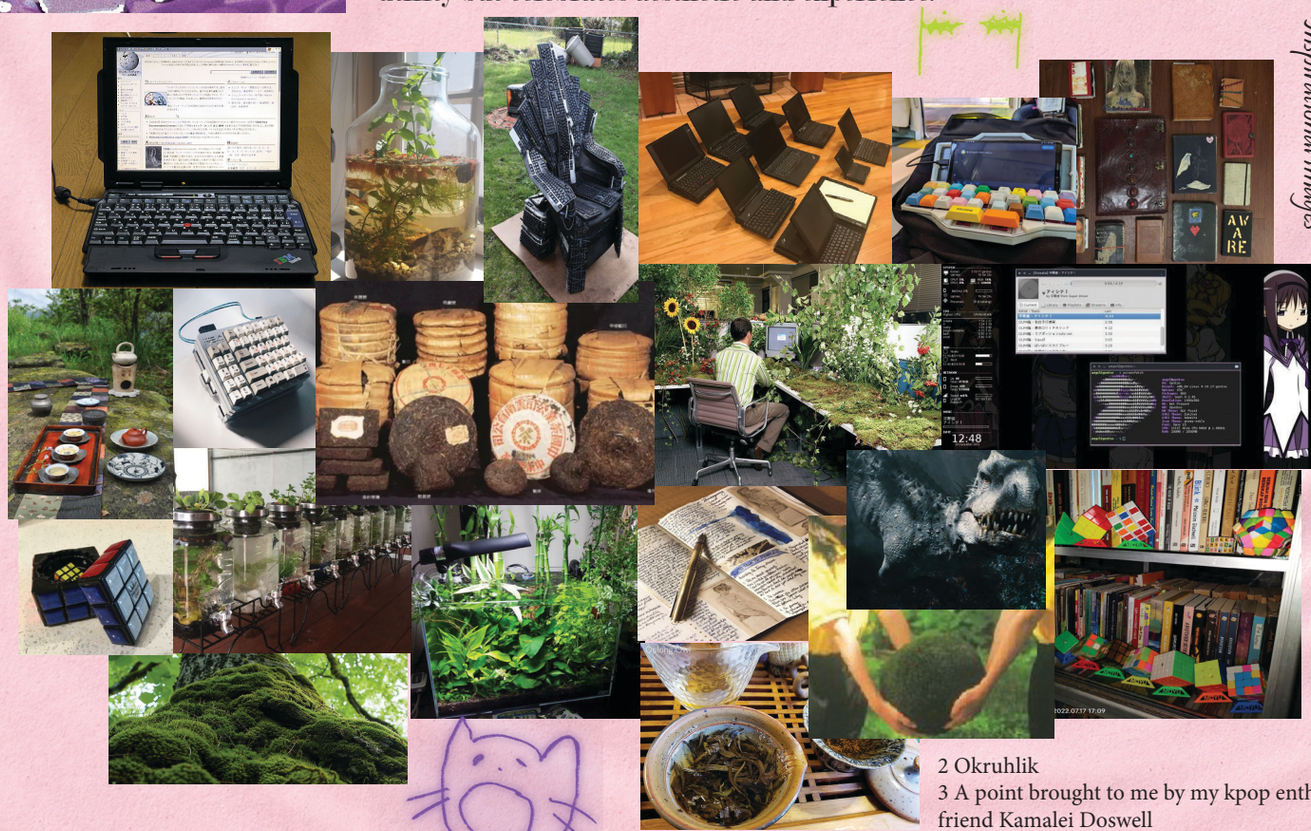
The kpop fan and the sports fan: both have favorite members, wear the merchandise of their favorite groups/teams, collect cards of players/idols, yet one is clearly more favored than the other. One is granted with social approval while the other is regarded with a cringey and delusional disdain.[3]

"I am Sailor Moon! I stand for love. And I also stand for justice. And in the name of the Moon, I will punish you!" – Sailor Moon (Damn Near Every Single Episode in Sailor Moon Franchise)



In comes Magical Girl, she not only is the peak of girlhood, existing in confidence of her socially shamed traits of femininity and emotion, but also participates in the universal power structure. For a Magical Girl is not a Magical Girl just because she is magic and a girl, physically and metaphorically, but she is a Magical Girl because her existence transcends the bounds of patriarchal pressures and systems.

A power structure in a Magical Girl sense is that of matriarchy, but specifically of what is not systemically masculine. Magical Girl does not simply replace patriarch with a female form of leadership, for this would still be masculine in logic and organization, maintaining an upper in a dualistic hierarchy[4], and perpetuate male gaze. Rather, traditional forms of leadership are subverted, traditional forms of plot are ignored, and this sort of media provides a refreshing world that does not maximize utility but celebrates aesthetic and experience.



Inspirational images[5]

"What fun is there in making sense?" – Pinkie Pie (My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic)

2 Okruhlik
3 A point brought to me by my kpop enthused friend Kamalei Doswell
4 Plumwood in the Logic of Colonization, 2002
5 These are all from pinterest

"Hi! I'm Pinkie Pie and I threw this party just for you!" - Pinkie Pie (My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic)

The arbitrariness of slice-of-life opposes male-gaze media's need for plot progression, and requirement for the characters, specifically the emotions of characters, to propel this plot in some form.

Systematization of the character into the plot-function creates character archetypes, erasing potential for the flourishing and deepened emotion of their self. Allowing characters to be free from the burden of plot-progression creates space for the "you," or the "I". A party just for a self, versus a party for a separated reason. A party for your birthday, a party for your arrival or your departure, are all externalizations of the pony, an externalization that is subjected to a system, the system of tradition, the system of obligation towards social performance.

Magical Girl Media pushes for a preservation of a conceptual self, of a prioritized ponyhood that has value beyond social practices.

"I've Never Actually Broken Any Of Your Stupid Laws! In Front Of You!" – Eda (The Owl House)

Female gaze preserves continuity in characterization, meaning that all characters are not only valued for more than their plot allows, but they are also indicated to have lives outside of screen time.

History is not "herstory" because the actions of women were not recorded. Masculine and colonial thought relies on documentation and the validity of being seen, and things are only seen when they are necessary. So while women are frequently seen in media, through the male gaze they exist only to be commanded by the male members of the cast[6], therefore objectified, and stripped not only of personhood, but lent to the same fate as objects, which are expected to stay in their original form, shape, and trajectory, unless impeded upon by another male force.

Failure of male gaze media to even pass the Bechdel test[7], has led to massive gaps in story that are often hungrily filled by another staple of girlhoodish behavior: writing and reading fanfiction.

Art by: Twelve Pen

"Then suddenly he looked at me and he fell down with a lovey-dovey look in his eyes. 'EbonyIloveyouwiluhavesexwithme.' he said." - Draco Malfoy to Ebony Dark'ness Dementia Raven Way (My Immortal)

Fanart by: A Fan

Fanfiction is a way to play with continuity and significance as well as give characters, who previously remained underdeveloped and stagnant images, agency. Fanfiction is awesome. Fanfiction allows for an unbound world with unbound logic and unbound plots. Significance is whatever the writer comprehends and fixates upon in their own life. Fanfiction is freeing, fanfiction is healing, I implore everyone who is reading this: write some fanfiction.

Fanfiction lingers on desire, significance is led by what is desired, and the form and function is not priorly stipulated by social needs and expectations from traditional, professional media and society. All forms of desire run rampant in fanfiction, that is what makes the genre beautiful. When there is problematic, not just socially cringey, but problematic fanfiction, this is not a product of desire, but the product of the socialscape in which the desire in a person has been cultivated.

Fanfiction is a side effect of passion, obsession, and fundamentally, love. Fanfiction is love, how can we hate on a genre that born from such a pure and wonderful feeling? When we hate on fanfiction, we are telling girls not to love, and not to desire.

6 A brief point made by Mulvey in Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, 1975, but she discusses concepts far more Freudian and sexually charged (and awesome) in the rest of the paper.

7 This test systematically posits an extremely low bar for female representation/characterization that requires of a film/book/show to have: two female characters with names who talk to each other about anything other than a man.

magical girl omfg if we do this again 12.indd 23 1/10/2025 3:04:47 PM

"Thinking isn't going to get us anywhere." – Usagi Tsukino (Sailor Moon Crystal)

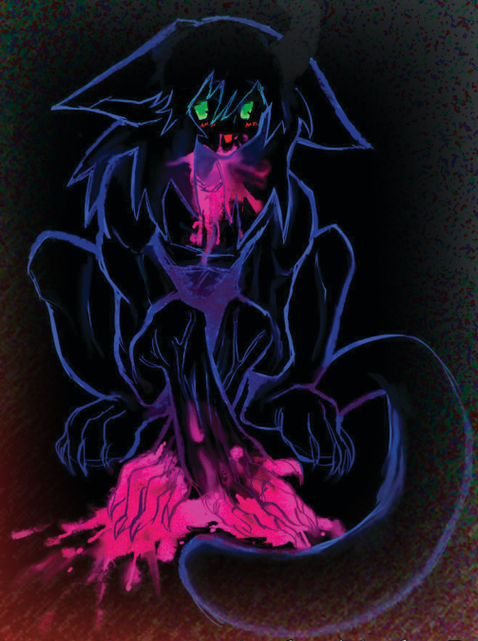
Thinking in its most oppressive, and most widely accepted form, must be "linear and articulate"[8]. Thinking as a whole is not oppressive, nor is it masculine, it is the manner in which thought is constricted and judged for validity and truth that leads to problems.

Thoughts should be able to just be there, and exist abstractly. The need to prove oneself, and connect points to previously validated things is never going to work, especially when previously valid things are already historically tainted with bias and oppression.

Treating thoughts more like feelings, sometimes traceable, yet sometimes not and existing on its own as itself, I believe is beneficial in subverting oppressive thought, and furthermore, liberating femininity and girlhood. If we can socially accept multiple, perhaps even contradictory, truths, this is akin to accepting the existence of multiple forms of self, humanized and validated self, from which the world is allowed to flourish from. Not just accepting multiple lenses, but multiple paradigms of thought at a time, and letting them permeate into social structures, enmeshing or avoiding or coexisting or criticizing, but flowing with a free will and unimpeded existence, uproots the platform of logic and thought that operates on having a right and a wrong. Binaries would also dissipate, even two dimensional spectrum would be void in the new multidimensional plane of thought.

Conversely and contradictorily, in thinking versus feeling, perhaps thinking needs to have a point, otherwise it would no longer be thinking. Perhaps thinking will always be a proactive task while feeling is more passive. But if so, there must be more blur between the two things, where connections are formed between viscerality of feelings and logically induced thoughts. It is quite odd to let thought validate itself from lofty conceptions of what is ethical, moral, and just, defined by those who historically dominated thought space, and apply theoretical expectations to physical bodies. If we maintain thought as an activity and logic as a method, we must let significantly more emotion leak into social application of it. What is used should not be what is "right" but what is "preferred" and "liked" by those affected.

However, this concept of application and real-world necessity is still extremely masculine in thought; sometimes, one just does things for the sake of it, because it can be done, and because it's fun for the individual. Repairing this system, although fruitful and far more "realistic" is still upholding a dominating system of hierarchy, and even if mechanisms are put in place for uplifting non-dominant thought, and the world feels ideally peaceful and equal, I still don't like it.



Art by: Twelve Pens

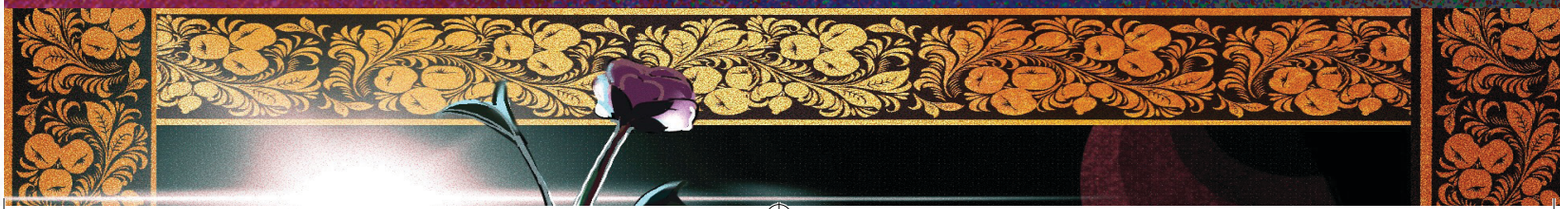
"There is no wrong way to fantasize" – Princess Celestia (My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic)

Magical Girl embodies this, for stories are infinite, and plots are all arguable, and what is best is a collective web of everyone's energy. As for viewers, there is no right and wrong story, no right and wrong plot, right or wrong way of interpretation, but simply a favored . Other media that is attempting to be abstract or philosophical is striving for this abstractness and philosophical-ness, consequently backing itself into quick dead ends in thought lines, unlike Magical Girl's infinite kaleidoscope of significance.

Magical Girl is uplifting because it escapes dehumanization of any character, villains and magical girls alike are allowed grace, and the only enemy is systematization and conformity in its broader concepts, which is never permanently endowed in any human, thus uplifting humanity.

Now this is not to say we should forgive problematic people, because we certainly shouldn't. But this is because we live in a different system of dominating logic, where fascism, genocide, conformity, and destruction, are all empowered. Forgiving in a system such as ours is extremely detrimental and causes mass hurt, and allows for more power to the system. It is only because Magical Girls participate in alternative logic power systems that humanhood successfully prevails.

8 Two spoken adjectives that solemnly resounded with me to describe colonial thought processes, Cruz Abarca, 2024



"THAT IS SEXY. SHABADADOO" – LIFE SEXY (YURI KUMA ARASHI)

LESBIANS and SAPPHIC LOVE. Take a break, and buy your friendly neighborhood lesbian a hot beverage please. It is hard work for them, being so cool all the time.

Lesbians are extremely important in the maintenance of the female gaze, and sapphic love is crucial in the balancing of space, time, and energy, regardless of whether or not it is accepted or shown at the forefront of society. Sapphic love's very existence as a force of nature is a jubilant phenomenon.

Now, I would like to take this space to appreciate hyperfemmes, hyperfemmes of all sorts, and especially hyperfemme lesbians. If Magical Girls exist, it is all of you! I cannot speak for you, for I am not you, but I often feel as if you have transcended past worldly confines, and with wholehearted zeal participate in Femininity[9].

This Femininity is vastly explored in Magical Girl media. Most widely distributed media has girls and women in states of femininity that are tailored for the male gaze, but Magical Girl media, features femmes of the extremely feminine sort who are aimed to please the taste of female viewers. Character designs feature a wide range of femininity as well, each one having personal style and notable uniqueness that makes sense with their personality and story. Magical Girl media truly shows the diversity of how one can be Feminine, and luxuriates in freedom of expression and presentation.

Art by: Twelve Pens

"I wasn't always fighting for love and justice. I was fighting for my friends and loved ones." – Sailor Moon (Sailor Moon Stars)

Feminism. Feminism in it's current state, is for the social concept and utility. We are in a state of emergency, women's rights not even having the performance of existing in legislation, specifically in protections for bodily autonomy and right to life, is abhorrent. We must fight for these rights, and ALL other tangible and physical political endeavors, in whatever way we may. Do not allow yourself to become "desensitized" and complacent to horrific normalized things. Never neglect the world that you have the power to perceive.

Yet rights and legislation on their own can only go so far, alone they only can ever provide a facade of liberation. And as for more "conceptual" feminism, feminism that strives to define and embrace, or redefine, or destroy conceptions of femininity and gender I find still can't alone do the job of liberating women. For although pondering on what woman, or the construct of woman, is in essence is marvelous and fun, it is still remolding and reshaping "womanhood" with the same original logic of necessity and utility that I so detest.

Especially when discussing "womanhood" in essence disconnected from social politic, I believe there should be absolutely nothing ascribed to it, no "nurturing" no "culture" no "natural" no "sex" nothing other than to be. To be a woman is to be a woman, just as to be oneself is to be oneself. There are with certainty trends in what womanhood entails, but ascribing those trends to define a woman is erasing every minority, and detracting from the validity of just being.

So how can one know who is a woman? They can tell you. Sure, they can lie, but only oneself can know that they are, and the pure, magical beauty of being a self in this world, allowed to be a self, is that you are what you are, not what someone else isn't, and not what someone sees nor demands of you.

"I won't ever back down on love" – Ginko (Yuri Kuma Arashi)

We need to let girls hang on to their selves! SO they can grow into women who are themselves (in the case that they become women of course)! We need to love girls, love what they love, and encourage girlhood to flourish and prosper, so even as adults, the core of girlness is strong and courageous and appreciated. We cannot love women nor liberate women unless we love girls and what girlhood is, because the girl is where the self resides and the loss of that identity is where the "othered" of the woman is set in stone.

And this of course means a world that accepts multiple selves, multiple significances and stories, a MAGICAL GIRL WORLD which implodes all that pesky masculine logic that retracts from the sparkle and fun of life.

9 Capital F Femininity as in Plato's Theory of Forms :D, sometime in 4th Century BC

First Ever Love Poem

By: Icarus

First Ever Love Poem
For the first time,
I am someone worthy of love.
Sit down at the kitchen table,
drink with me.
Everything will be okay, you know,
It will become something beautiful.
Here is a block of cheese.
you want to shred it yourself.
My mother gives me the instructions
over the phone while the dishwasher sings.
A door opens in the hallway, shuts, laughter echoes.
A dog barks. So many people have gone home.
I no longer wonder what love is like.
The sheets have been changed so you have somewhere to sleep,
if you want to stay.
The heater is running in my apartment.
I pour white wine into a glass, take a sip.
Everywhere there is the sound of doors opening.
If you need anything, I'll run to the store.
I won't be but a minute.

I won't be but a minute.
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if you want to stay.
I no longer wonder what love is like.
A dog barks. So many people have gone home.
A door opens in the hallway, shuts, laughter echoes
over the phone while the dishwasher sings.
My mother gives me the instructions.
You want to shred it yourself.
Here is a block of cheese,
It will become something beautiful.
Everything will be okay, you know,
Drink with me.
Sit down at the kitchen table.
I am someone worthy of love
For the first time.

Art by: Ryland C

cheap imitation carillon

cloud-shrouded moon (times two)
crutches up against a window pane
late to class: dreamed of slipping
through shards of mirror-glass,
kissing something totally unreal.

is it wrong to reach for what
i know can never be mine
always: thumbed loose
threads of my keffiyeh,
eyes pointed daggers.

cheap imitation carillon
something rotten like
a pear: many litter the
lawn outside Alareer Hall,
smashed into oblivion.

stopped at railroad crossing
hinges creak, shudder-stumble
young bodies: on rocks & kicking
mulch under the belly of the
beast,
i can still
taste it all on
my tongue.

poem by
Robin Bailey

MISSED CONNECTIONS

"you're the beautiful lady who complimented my earrings at the campus market. i wanted to talk to you so bad but i had no idea how to!!!"

"We met at the encampment, but you had anonymously talked to me before that. We had fun getting to know each other within and occasionally outside of camp, but we both had partners at the time. We've stayed in touch, and now that we're both single, I wonder if it could work? I hope to see you soon :)"

"You are my unrequited eye-contactship. Except there is no eye contact. But your buttocks is handcrafted by the Gods"

"Looking back, it's embarrassing to recognize the degree to which my intellectual curiosity those first two years of college paralleled the interests of various women I was attempting to get to know: Marx and Marcuse so I had something to say to the long-legged socialists who lived in my dorm; Fanon and Gwendolyn Brooks for the smooth-skinned sociology major who never gave me a second look; Foucault and Woolf for the ethereal bisexual who wore mostly black. As a strategy for picking up girls, my pseudo-intellectualism proved mostly worthless; I found myself in a series of affectionate but chaste friendships." – BARACK OBAMA

"I hope I get to know you more. Already, I like your goofy laugh; your smile; the thought you put into the work you do. A friend called you "YDSA's most eligible bachelor"—somehow, the understatement of the century."

"There was someone at my 'IntroDUCKtion' (I hate this title) who had the absolute coolest beige jacket that they had covered in drawings and patches. Y'know how you can guess someone's vibe based on stickers they have on their water bottles or computers? It was like that. I looooove pokémon and they had a Wooper drawing on the back of their jacket, including some other pokémon things. But if someone is a Wooper fan, you know they're chill. I wanted to be friends with Wooper Kid but all I said to them was "I love your Wooper drawing!" I never saw them again after IntroDUCKtion. We probably could have had a sick friendship :("

"I wished we weren't friends, wished I didn't have a thing to not date friends."

"We got assigned on a group project together, I never even got your name. I dont think you got mine either. I spent three days shooting you as my subject for our short film. Both our clothes were mended and patched, our hair was dyed. We took smoke breaks together while shooting. Then the class ended. It was our final. Then I transferred. We would have been good."

"We made split second eye contact going down from the 9th floor. I transferred into your 6 person class 2 days later. I didn't talk to you for the following 2 months but laughed at your jokes and listened intently to your 10 min. nuclear physics presentation despite being an avid arts girlie. I wasn't brave enough to follow you on Instagram but I did briefly stalk your Pinterest."

"You look like my ex, but way more innocent. Fuck you for getting with that new bitch"

"That forbidden GE..."

"I met this really cute person on the bus with curly long dark hair, green eyes, a Roman nose, they were pretty masc & had a messenger bag. I think we were flirting but I also don't know if they're queer :/"

"Your friend said I was your type. But you were too drunk to remember my name. So I left you on the dance floor twice."

"beautiful beautiful femme with heterochromia i saw one time at the encampment"

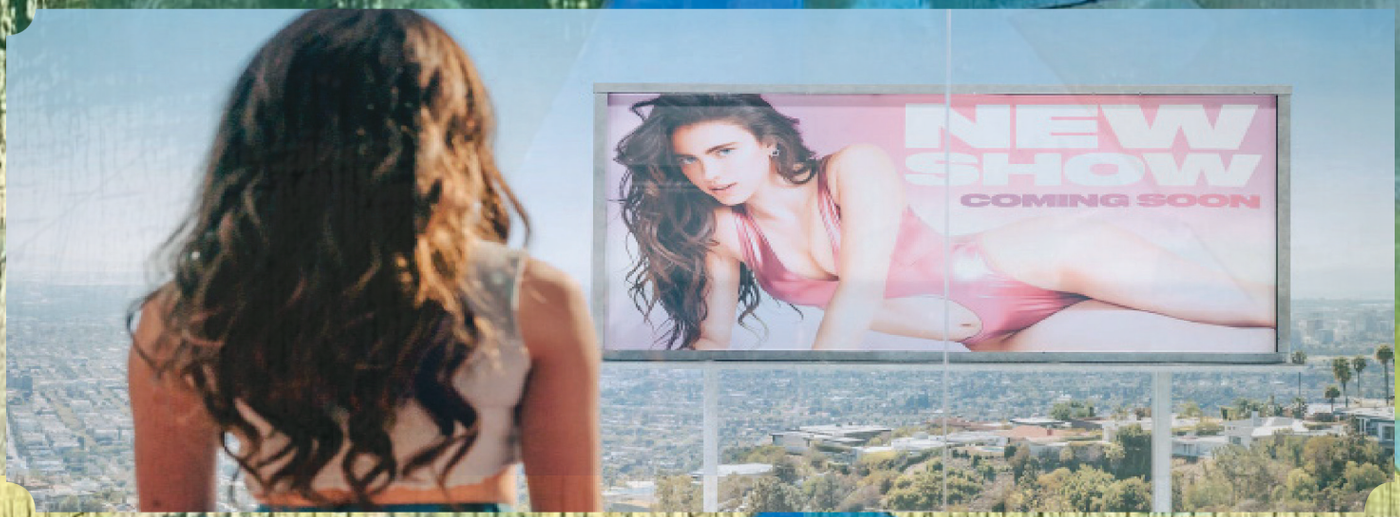
"A comrade recently said they would follow you into war. I would agree– and much more"

"If your dialogue was a philosophy I'd spend my waking moments reaching to achieve your articulation of historical and current knowledge, opinions, vocab and LOOKS. LIKE FUCK- an alt aspiration fr."

The Substance:

A Spectacle of Patriarchy

Written by Dorian Blue



The Substance, released in September 2024, is a part horror, part dark comedy , and is a biting, visceral critique on the way women are treated as they age, especially in the public eye. It was written and directed by Coralie Fargeata, and was her second film. The opening of the film opens showingshows an egg beingthat is injected with a fluid, and then splittingsplits into two yolks, giving the audience a hint on what the titular drug does. The narrative then follows Elizabeth Sparkle, a once beloved celebrity whose star wanes as younger people take her place. EShe feels as if her life is over, even though she has money and privilege that most could only dream of, she feels that her life is over; women from all walks of life aren't spared from the patriarchy. After she gets in a minor car accident, she meets a nurse who tells her she's a worthy candidate for something referred to only as "the substance." She tries to resist the pull of what's promised by the mysterious drug, but after she gets fired from her last remaining gig, an aerobic fitness show, she gives in.

What follows is a fever dream of highs, lows, and intense body horror. Elizabeth injects herself with the bright yellow-green substance and a new version of her duplicates and bursts out of her back. The viewer isn't spared from any of the gore; the splitting isit's a long and painful, Elizabeth scene where she's splayed out on her bathroom floor in her own viscera. This new being names herself Sue. Rather than a doppelganger of Elizabeth, Sue is something entirely different. She's a new facet, so hypersexualized and perfected that the fracturing between them begins immediately.

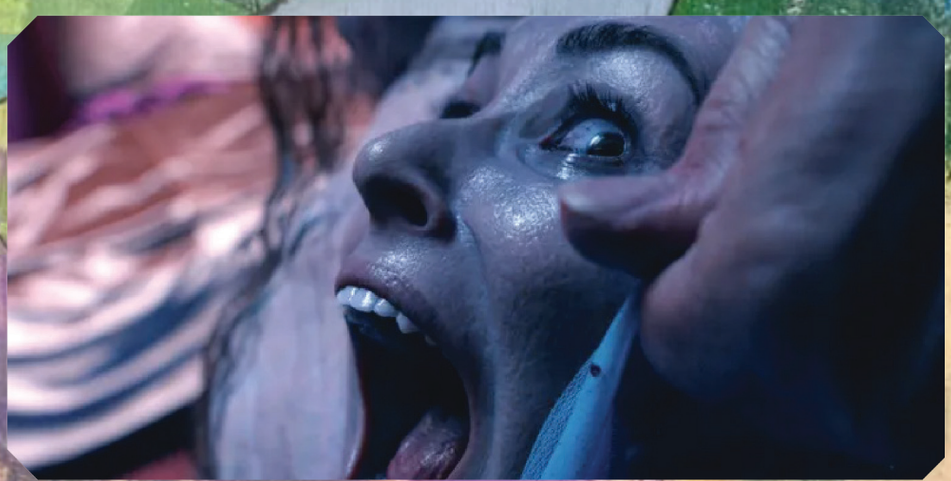
As Sue ogled her naked body in the mirror, a feeling of dread took me over. She felt euphoria because of how "perfect" her body was, something that many women strive for. However, it was, as always,'s always a hollow victory. Her body is still nothing but a commodity to be sold and leered at. Sue auditions to be the direct replacement of Elizabeth on the fitness show, easily getting the part and signing with the same sleazy agent, Harvey, who fired Elizabeth. Harvey, along with all the other men in the film, are extreme caricatures

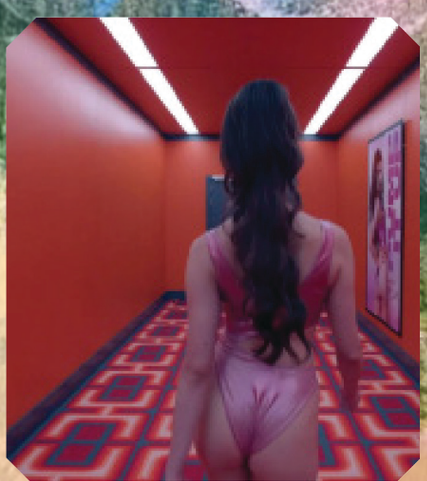
that represent the different forms of sexism women encounter. They all desire Sue for her youthfulness and naivety, while ignoring or mocking Elizabeth.

There are a few rules Elizabeth and Sue have to follow: her consciousness switches between the bodies every seven days, meaning the other is completely comatose for that time. The only tether to the creator of the substance they have is a disembodied male voice on the other side of the phone. He reminds them multiple times that they "are one" and to "respect the balance." This is an impossible task. The growing resentment between them represents how women are constantly pitted against each other and themselves. While focused on this, the patriarchy is able to go on completely unimpeded. Even as the tension worsens, Elizabeth doesn't want to give up how amazing she feels as Sue, saying "I need you because I hate myself." Their relationship isshows not only the inner struggle and misogyny many women deal with, but also reminiscent ofmirrors mother-daughter relationships. Mothers often view their daughters as their mirrors, even extensions of themselves.

The tide of Sue takes over everything. There's a billboard of her face right outside the apartment, her show is on TV, and everyone is chasing her star. Elizabeth is getting lost, and her body is beginning to deteriorate from not properly following the balance. She makes one last effort to feel confidence in herself. She calls back an admirer from earlier in the film, who told her "she was still the most beautiful girl in the world." They set up a date together, but as she's getting ready in front of the mirror, she keeps trying on different makeup and taking it off. It culminates in her rubbing her face until her makeup completely smudges. Then, she stands him up, and begins binge eating for the next several days. Despite all of the graphic, intense imagery throughout the movie, this was the scene that affected me the most.

This scene is a tipping point. Sue becomes a parasite, completely sucking all life and vitality from Elizabeth so that she can be "on" all the time. Everything comes to a head on the night of the New Year's Eve show. Until this scene, the only in-film audience is the eye of the camera, other than Harvey. While preparing for the show, Sue's body begins to fall apart, a direct consequence for staying as Sue for too long. She begins to panic as all her teeth fall out. As she's running out of the studio, she crosses paths with Harvey and a group of stockholders, all ogling her. He asks her to smile for them, insisting that **"pretty girls should always smile."**





Art by Ryland C

On Hurricanes and Hand Grenades

BY: ECLIPSE

art by Alexa Cruz Abarca

homes and bridges away, but never leaving such vast rifts through huge swathes of land. Reportedly, damage in some areas was so bad that emergency services couldn't even find the area they were looking for due to the land being so unrecognizable, or the town just completely gone.

While evacuation orders were issued in many counties prior to the storm, these orders are only a warning about the immense danger. People are still left to their own devices to get to safety, meaning that folks are packing whatever they can to sit in traffic for hours hoping to get as far away as possible. While that sounds absolutely miserable, even more miserable is the situation of those without the means to just pack up and GTFO.

Folks who are unable to leave because of a vast array of circumstances are left to ride out the storm as best they can. Unsurprisingly, the poor and disadvantaged are the ones being disproportionately left behind. In the aftermath, survivors are left to pick through ruined towns and trek through forest to reach assistance. Some folks document this experience and post it to

On the night of Thursday, September 26th, 2024, Hurricane Helene smashed into the southeast coast of the US as a category 4 hurricane. The storm traveled north through Georgia, parts of South and North Carolina, East Tennessee, and Kentucky, causing major damage in all areas. Record breaking storm surges and rainfall drenched the area, while 140 MPH winds assailed everything above ground. During the storm, 20 tornadoes were reported from across the affected states, as if a hurricane wasn't enough to deal with.

Before Helene, I recall hurricanes flooding entire towns, washing social media, showing their families with belongings and furry friends alike packed for a harrowing journey and an apocalyptic scene. Some videos display the extent of the destruction, like newfound cliffs where roads used to be and canyons where there used to be towns.

As I write this article on October 22, nearly a month after the hurricane, the death toll stands at 224, and dozens remain unaccounted for. 7,300+ homes and businesses remain powerless, while other areas have yet to re-secure clean water. The residents of Asheville, NC, are still boiling water to make it safe for consumption. Meanwhile, while people are in need of help and support here at home, America is spending billions on supporting Netenyahu's genocide and war on the Palestinian people. Instead of doing the bare minimum to assist American people dealing with disaster, our country is choosing to help enact untold disaster and destruction upon millions of innocent people across the world. These actions and inactions make "American

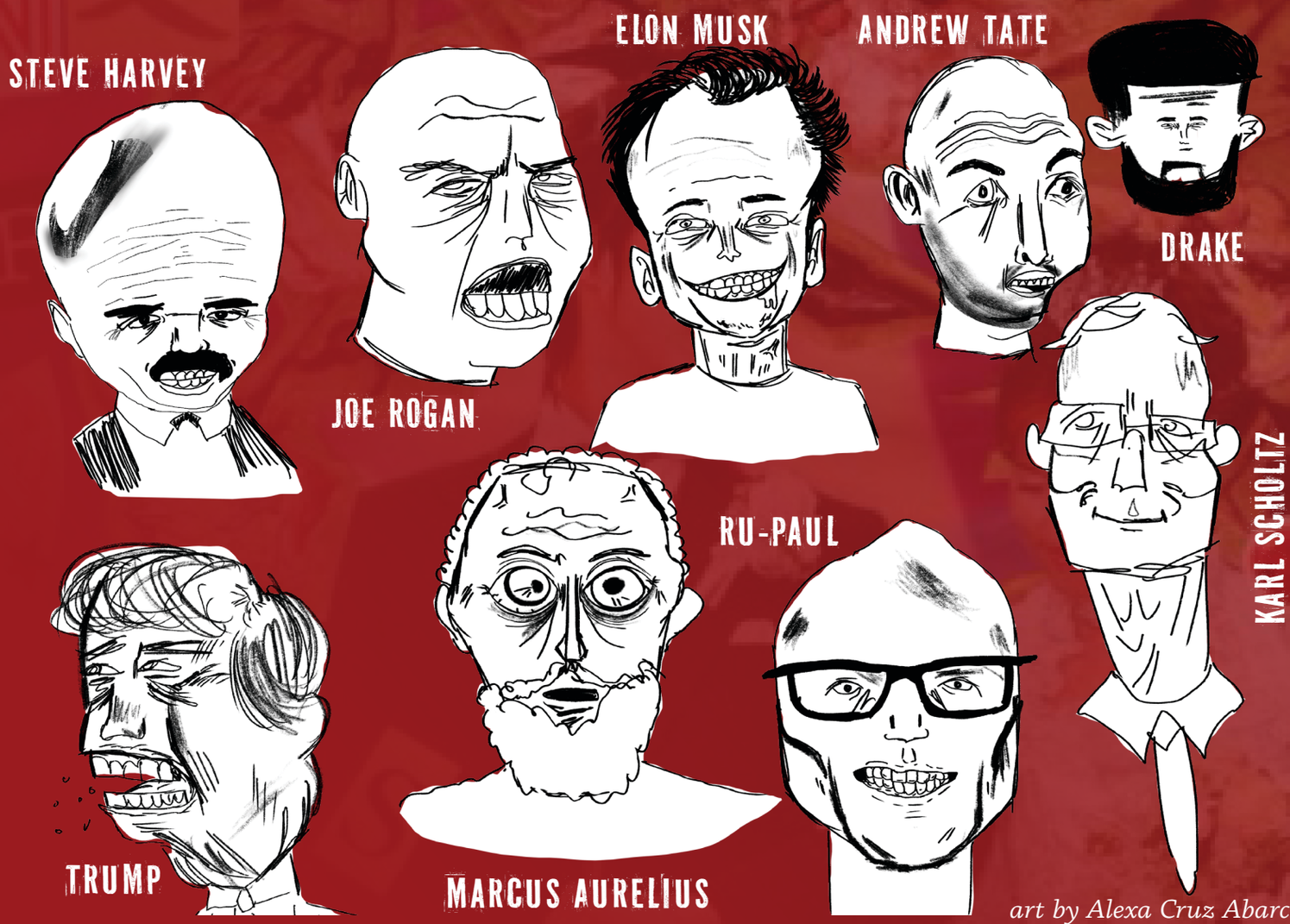
interests" abundantly clear. The leaders of the American system are far more intent on supporting indiscriminate murder than saving those who need saving. If by any chance you needed another reason why the morality of US actions are beyond backwards, allow this one to suffice.

We've been aware for a long time that global warming is making storms and other natural disasters more frequent and dangerous, and now these events are well and truly upon us. Helene was the 3rd hurricane in a year on America's southeast coast, and the next storms will not wait for us to finish picking up the pieces. Storms like Helene will continue getting more frequent and destructive, and southeast America will be putting itself back together for months while the rest of the country goes on with business as usual.

And of course, Hurricane Milton made landfall in Florida less than two weeks after Helene. Folks, we've driven our home, this entire planet, far past the natural processes it can sustain. We've known the consequences for such behavior for decades, and still failed to alter course. With no signs of significant change as this crisis deepens, we will continue to be forced to reckon with extreme disasters on an exponential scale. We will have to adapt to these conditions even as we lose more lives, infrastructure, and space as the ocean literally rises around us.

As society struggles with a variety of internal conflicts, this self imposed death by Nature threatens to decide how or even if we will get the chance to heal our fractured and beautiful Earth.

MISOGYNISTS THAT MEN FAN OVER



art by Alexa Cruz Abarca

Digital Detox

A Strategy for Dismantling Disinformation *and* Defending Democracy

By Joe Merkley

After two weeks of what can only be described as proverbially wetting the bed – endless scrolling, listening to professional cable news hogwashers, and slogging through countless bullshit think pieces – I am at a breaking point. We elected a man who vowed to be a "dictator on day one," said immigrants "poison the blood of the country" and incited a deadly insurrection (Farley, 2021). Now, at last, I descend to bless the world with my thoughts.

After many conversations with Trumplodytes I can say one thing for certain: many of them did not know what they voted for. I am sick of having conversations where I need to explain how his tariffs would tax American importers or seeing the TikTok trend where young people "listen to Trump's Access Hollywood tape for the first time" (Latifi, 2024). All of this raises urgent questions about how the modern media environment enables the rise of authoritarians through cycles of ignorance. Social media has evolved into a powerful platform that amplifies misinformation and enables overconfidence, leading individuals to fixate on trivial matters. This underscores the urgent need for us to re-evaluate our relationship with online media, mitigating its negative externalities on our perceptions and priorities.

This is no small issue: Donald Trump is a quintessential product of the digital age. His power doesn't come from policy or vision, but instead the dumbing down of a hyperconnected world. Coverage attributing the rise of MAGA as solely a product of Trump's talent (eye roll), the Democratic Party's missteps or economics misses the more foundational variables at play in his re-election. It's like someone coughing up blood while frantically hunting for a cough drop, ignoring their internal bleeding.

Since 2010, the rise of far-right politics has spread globally – from Hungary to India, Argentina, Germany and Brazil – across diverse political contexts (Seymour, 2024). The one constant between regions has been the rise of social media. According to a study by Schraff and Pontusson (2023), there is no evidence that regional economic stagnation in EU countries correlates with the electoral performance of far-right parties. That same study found only a limited correlation between the outsourcing of manufacturing jobs and the rise of alt-right parties in the EU. This all points to a deeper dynamic than what people attribute to economic inequality, where politicians offering misleading solutions to complex problems have gained the upper hand. If we're going to dismantle the evil, racist dudebro army propping Trump up, we need to attack this root cause of his power: his metaphorical one ring, which lies atop a place called Mount Stupid.

If we're going to dismantle the evil, racist dudebro army propping Trump up, we need to attack the root cause of his power.

Mount Stupid isn't a real mountain – but if it were, even Bear Grylls would avoid it. It's a place where people with limited knowledge opine confidently on complex issues. The term "Mount Stupid" was popularized by Zach Weinersmith's 2011 comic and refers to the Dunning-Kruger effect. In today's digital age, this effect is amplified, as systems reward engagement over accuracy. So, if you make it through this long essay, congratulations; you have outlasted the average attention span of Mount Stupid's residents.

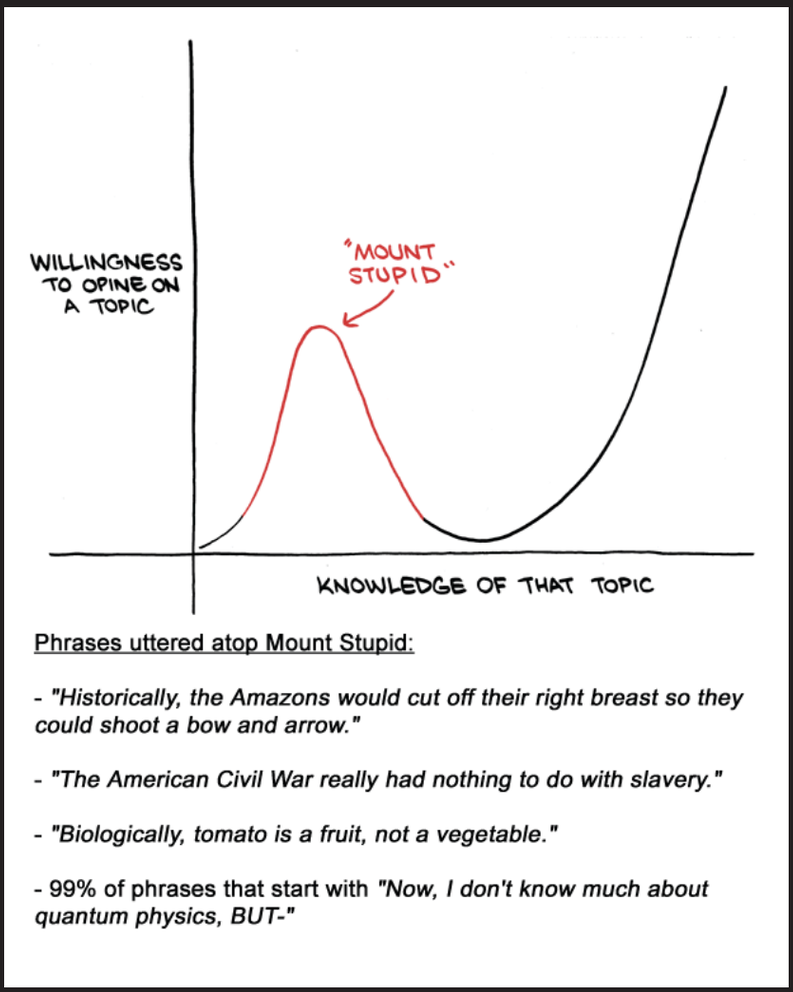
Overconfidence with limited knowledge is evident in the alarming gaps in civic and policy knowledge among Americans. An Annenberg Public Policy Center study found 35% of Americans can't name all three branches of government, and only 29% identified freedom of the press as a First Amendment right. We have a problem when most Americans believe "freedom of press" is about ironing shirts without government interference.

For much of the public, foundational knowledge gaps might undermine informed decision-making on critical issues. For example, Yale's Program on Climate Change Communication reported that only 56% of Americans recognize scientific consensus on human-caused climate change, and just 46% believe it will personally affect them. Among Republicans, these false perceptions about the climate are higher (Ballew et al., 2024).

Social media compounds the disinformation problem. A poll from Pew Research Center found that 78% of Americans at least sometimes get their news from social media (Liedke & Wang, 2024). A 2015 study by Williams et al. in Global Environmental Change analyzed climate change discourse on Twitter, revealing polarized communities often only engage within their ideological bubbles. When interactions between groups did happen, they were rife with negative sentiment, reinforcing division over facts. Similarly, a 2022 report by the Integrity Institute found that misinformation spreads faster and further than accurate information, especially on platforms like TikTok and X (Allen, 2022). Even information that could not be identified as patently false on these platforms could be missing critical context due to arbitrary word/time limits that were missed in the report. Echo chambers exacerbate the Dunning-Kruger dynamic by enforcing pre-existing biases.

The left isn't wearing Kevlar; misinformation sticks to us like glitter at a music festival.

One of the most insidious consequences of online echo chambers is the much discussed 'alt-right pipeline,' which shifts individuals toward extremist views through the interplay between the social media algorithm and conservative media machine. As Bradley McEntee explains in his 2024 Temple News article "The Alt Rights Silent Indoctrination of Young Men," he watched his boys start by watching YouTube gaming content and then several years later they were dancing to "The Sex Offender Shuffle" (McEntee, 2024). On the macro level, we see this happen as Republicans went from nominating respectable public servants like John McCain or neocons like Mitt Romney to authoritarians like Trump.


WILLINGNESS TO OPINE ON A TOPIC
"MOUNT STUPID"
KNOWLEDGE OF THAT TOPIC
Phrases uttered atop Mount Stupid:
- "Historically, the Amazons would cut off their right breast so they could shoot a bow and arrow."
- "The American Civil War really had nothing to do with slavery."
- "Biologically, tomato is a fruit, not a vegetable."
- 99% of phrases that start with "Now, I don't know much about quantum physics, BUT-"

Zach Weinersmith/Saturday Morning Breakfast Cereal Comic

On the micro level, this pipeline often begins with nonpolitical content on Joe Rogan and ends with extremist figures like Tucker Carlson. The trend could also look like teenage edgelords being susceptible to anti-woke messaging after years of jokes about "blue-haired" liberals (McEntee, 2024). The online left will live and die terminally uncool to these people because we refuse to submerge ourselves in an irony so deep it ends up being xenophobic or racist. This sadly leaves us susceptible to the clickbait contrarianism abundant online. Most of the people on the alt-right pipeline possess a confident disregard of facts and reality.

However, us kombucha-chugging, tree-hugging, bleeding heart hippies aren't immune to misinformation, either. Many Trump supporters were once Democrats who shifted after being "redpilled" online. RFK Jr., once a climate lawyer and Democratic presidential candidate, has now pivoted to become Trump's pick for HHS secretary. Similarly, Tulsi Gabbard, a former Democratic congresswoman, is set to lead the National Intelligence Agency (POTAS, 2024). Joe Rogan was a Bernie Sanders supporter in 2020 but now backs Trump (Graziosi 2024). Elon Musk, former donor to Obama and Hillary (and king of Mount Stupid), backs Trump in 2024. Vice presidential elect JD Vance called Trump "American's Hitler" in 2016 (Slattery & Coster, 2024). Even Trump himself was a registered Democrat who gave $5,000 to Kamala Harris in 2011 (Chakraborty, 2024). The point? People are not frozen in amber – even a left leaner today could undergo a full MAGA metamorphosis tomorrow.

Though liberals are generally more pro-institutional than conservatives, that does not make us immune to misleading information online. For example, in 2024, many left-leaning influencers spread false stories claiming the Trump assassination attempt in Pennsylvania was staged (Thompson & Hsu, 2024). Vaccine hesitancy is another area where Mount Stupid has caused the non-right public to become dumber. After physician Andrew Wakefield published a debunked study that linked MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccines to autism (oh no, much better risk a measles outbreak then have an autistic child!). Wakefield's paper then spread online, and figures like RFK Jr. profited by pushing anti-vaccine rhetoric to leftists (North, 2022). Much like MAGA in 2024, some online Democrats in 2004, spread a story about George Bush stealing the election from John Kerry (Thompson & Hsu, 2024).

This online misinformation problem is also pronounced within the radical left. Green Party Presidential Candidate Jill Stein shows how a reactionary outsider on the left can spew just as much misinformation as those on the right. Stein has used her degree from Harvard and her platform to back pseudoscience about vaccines and GMOs. Sadly, GMOs are mainly used to add Vitamin A to rice, and are not part of some George Soros funded globalist conspiracy (The University of Alabama at Birmingham, 2024). In 2016, Stein also called for a new 9/11 investigation (Neidig, 2016). To reiterate, all of these movements started or spread online and infiltrated leftist circles.

None of this is to say that I don't occasionally vacation on Mount Stupid (trust me, the view's great, but the company is questionable). This issue is truly pervasive, and though it is hard to find statistics polling everyday people on false information about specific issues, many of us see it in our day-to-day lives. Otherwise decent people speaking confidently about the "massive numbers of people detransitioning" (HRC Foundation, 2024), or about how "people on SNAP are defrauding the government" (Keep, 2023). In a class breakout room, I mentioned that Ukraine wasn't part of NATO, explaining – if it were – we'd be at war with Russia due to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. A left-leaning classmate confidently told me Ukraine was in NATO, and to my surprise, two others backed her up. It felt like debating Gaza with people who couldn't find it on a map. The problem is that many feel entitled to strong opinions despite knowing little about the issue. This stems from an online ecosystem where everyone has the same-sized microphone, and provocative reactionary remarks spread faster than the foundational facts they're supposed to be built on. The left isn't wearing Kevlar; misinformation sticks to us like glitter at a music festival.

While the social media platforms are the tip of the iceberg, Mount Stupid corrupts everything. Much like the terminally online, cable news pundits and op-ed artists also exemplify the Dunning-Kruger effect when endlessly perseverating on topics that they don't really know jack about. Sadly, the cable news gurus' conversation during the election seeped its way to the social media

5 Step Plan to
Clean Mount Stupid

1. **Block/limit social media (e.g., use apps like ScreenZen).**
2. **Get involved – protest, volunteer or donate to push back against disinformation.**
3. **Support journalism by subscribing to reputable local or national outlets.**
4. **Don't post or share things you don't understand – otherwise, you will be complicit in constructing a society full of stupid people.**
5. **Build community offline: start initiatives to foster connections IRL.**

commentariat, which during and after every election fails to talk about the real issues, instead focusing on cheap punditry or "hot button topics" that get clicks. Articles like "The Democrats Need Another Bill Clinton" by Gerald F. Seib call for Democrats to be more moderate (Seib, 2024), meanwhile The Washington Post columnist Perry Bacon calls for Democratic populism in his op-ed "Opinion: A winning strategy is hidden in these 4 theories on Harris's loss" (Jr, 2024). Both articles opine about the minutiae of campaign strategy, missing the point. The real issue isn't strategy –it's that Trump shouldn't even be a contender. A better-informed electorate would render such tactical debates irrelevant, sidestepping Mount Stupid's disastrous landslide entirely. Because of the media's hyper fixation on tactical campaign framing, many Americans you talk to are better equipped to be back seat campaign managers than make the right choice in the voting booth. Even if a strategy tweak could swing the election, it doesn't change the fact that Kamala is a capable woman – basically, anyone would have voted for her unless possessing a spectacular lapse in judgment or knowledge. Trump, on the other hand, is an incompetent man who isn't fit to call bingo numbers, let alone manage the nuclear triad.

A common symptom from the Dunning-Kruger effect is missing the forest for the trees. Asking Americans to practice some semblance of media literacy while surrounded by the bullshit on Mount Stupid is like giving someone ice water in hell. I have a different solution, and it involves following the advice of 19th century yuppies called Luddites. The Luddites were a group of English workers who rioted and destroyed textile machinery. It would be a mischaracterization to suggest that Luddism was a simplistic movement against technology and inevitable change. If that were true I would be a hypocrite; like a dude who takes out his air pods to complain about the other kids being glued to their phones. As Richard Conniff describes in Smithsonian Magazine, the real Luddites of the 1800s skilled handicrafts men protesting poor British economic policy and an endless war against Napoleon. The Luddites' concerns about the mills and machines focused on justified anger towards factory owners, who the Luddites argue were making poor products and paying the machine operators too little (Conniff, 2011). Their concerns were about tangible genuine grievances, and their solutions revolved around how the textile machines were used, not whether those machines ought to exist in the first place.

Many so-called "Neo-Luddites" are calling for a similar boycott of AI today, and I think we should do the same with social media. While ChatGPT might take our jobs, Facebook and TikTok have already taken our minds (Melcarriere, 2023). Unlike the Luddites of the past, I don't think we should destroy our computers or set fire to an iPhone factory. Instead, we need to follow the Luddites example by abstaining ourselves from the social media algorithms that are being used to profit from ignorance. In recent years, New York Teenagers have made headlines for starting a "Luddite club." The idea as explained in the 2022 Alex Vadukul New York Times piece "'Luddite' Teens Don't Want Your Likes" is that we should trade in our smart phones for flip phones to take our lives back. The best part is that by making it a club, the teens created the permission structure for other teens to join. The Luddite club meets every week at the park to talk about books like "Crime and Punishment" or have conversations about their lives. The criticism (as explained by the kids in the article) is that not everyone can completely get rid of their phones. Comparably, asking everyone to go completely off social media might in some ways be a classist or privileged expectation (Vadukul, 2022). It is not beyond me that social media is important for minority groups to connect outside of the conventional orthodoxy.

Yet what this election has made clear is that we need to redefine our relationship with online media – that is, the social and conventional media structures that lead us to vacationing year-round on Mount Stupid and are slowly turning many into uninformed MAGA sympathizers. We have a responsibility to the country to be educated on these issues, and need to advocate for a world that values truth.

Abandoning social media dependence for most of us might mean diminishing codependency and for some might mean sobriety. I have been a vegetarian since 2016, even though being vegan would be a better choice. I knew that I could not realistically make myself vegan, but I believe being vegetarian is still better for the planet than being a carnivore. I took that action to redefine my relationship to food because I could not live with myself being complicit in the hurt of people all over the world, many of which are significantly less privileged than myself. The world does not operate in absolutes, but continuing to use social media as we have been is leading us towards disaster.

So, how does Luddism relate to Trump and Mount Stupid? Much like the tech titans of their day, we share a moral imperative to stand up to the specific ways big tech is being used to subjugate working class people. A docile, misinformed public serves modern royalty as it did monarchs of old. The Republican playbook is a master class in keeping people distracted and divided. They bank on you spending 15 hours a week glued to algorithm-driven echo chambers and swallowing 20-second outrage pellets shoved down your throat like smooshed up baby food. They want you enraged at trans folks you've never spoken to, immigrants you've never encountered, and crime you've never experienced – all while keeping the real power players and policies out of focus. Social media is not just a distraction; it's a strategy, designed to keep us mad at each other instead of them. Let's be clear: the only way to stick it to the man is to disrupt their means of corporate mind control.

Let's be clear: the only way to stick it to the man is to disrupt their means of corporate mind control.

Post Election Feelings --From the Collective

Hey y'all, I'm fuckin IRATE. I knew that either way the election went there was always gonna be a long hard fight against the powers that be and the oppression they enact, but this outcome is really upsetting. I'm so angry that so many people believe that shoestain of a human is capable of leading a nation, and I'm furious that so many people have been deceived and misled into thinking that he will do what is right for them. We're gonna have to witness a whole lot of bullshit in the next four years, and there's no telling what will come along to turn our world upside down yet again. But if there's one thing I'd like you to remember it is that this turn of events is not the death of love and empathy and kindness. Such things carry strength on a cosmic scale and will continue to be my rock while the world seems to spin faster and faster. So, in a place that is actively trying to take many things from us, taking care of yourself and your loved ones is an act of resistance. Finding happiness and comfort is an act of resistance. Loving yourself and your friends is an act of resistance! I know y'all will be right there with me on the frontlines, (because they're everywhere) so let's give it everything we got.
Love,
Eclipse

The sad truth is that most Americans do not care about genocide, or racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, ableism, or anything else that does not effect them. They only care about the issues affecting them. They voted for the candidate that could better lie to them about improving the economy.
-anonymous

I will prevail through this because I have mourned but now I organize. I illustrate to connect people in a space. I feel like I'm in middle school, 12 years old when Trump was first elected. Fear swirling around my stomach but I lived and I will be better than before.
alex(a) cruz abarca (we will live)

My first day stepping into the ROAR was a breath of maybe not-the-freshest air, as a community college transfer student having experienced next to nothing similar at any of my previous institutions. I still feel that relief now – in spite of the election, I know, at least here, I can come and lay on these couches caked in years of grime and vent about politics; I can tell stupid jokes and laugh with comrades; I can feel like we can make real change, here, and improve the immediate lives of ourselves and our communities through the work we do. I didn't have that before: the reality in which I now do is thanks to all of you.
–Robin Bailey

My heart goes out to all immigrants, migrants, and refugees; families of immigrants, migrants, and refugees; and prospective immigrants, migrants, and refugees, whose lives will be affected in the upcoming 4 years and beyond due to the reelection of Trump.
Umbrella

It was sad to see many of the insecurities that many Americans have been weaponized to incite harm against marginalized people. The election made me realize that we have a lot of work to do to ensure that people are safe and to make sure that this does not happen again because it is going to be a very scary time for a lot of people. Getting out of it four years ago felt like a new breath of fresh air and to be thrown back into it again was a lot for me to process.
-evewasframed

I feel dehumanized. Am I an object for men to fuck? That's the regard of the now president and his 72 million some voters. I want to believe mens' ignorance (making generalizations bc i dont give a fuck about deciphering and tiptoeing anymore- if it's not all men then go tell your "bro" he's a piece of shit for relaying male supremacy) will catch up to them. Karma is inevitable... right? Have the evils of the world ever been forced to pay for their wrongdoings? Or is the world naturally unfair where some suffer without reason and others benefit from and feed off that pain? I know some will never feel guilt or repent or be forced to experience the hurt they inflict. Fucking hell that makes me so mad. Where do I put this anger? Female rage will become more powerful than it has ever been in the past. Half of humans. Why do we have a gender war? I don't feel magical today I feel beat into submission. As magical girl myself I want to feel anything and everything and today that equates to holding in a scream that would rattle the heavens. Maybe we need to get crazier so they don't even want us as objects. Literally just start screaming. All the time. Just fucking constant screaming. I also enjoy speculating the no sex protest… could be effective in exposing the those who believe we owe them sex. But I've met more males that fundamentally believe they're superior and we're here to serve them physically than ones who don't terrify me. But that also leads to horrifying realizations that women lack the biological strength to beat men in hand to hand combat. Rapists don't care about the word no. And now the goddamn president of the united states ENCOURAGES and ADVOCATES for acts that drive girls to suicide. I am so fucking mad. What women voted for that monster? What sick fucked up male manipulation has made some women believe that we belong in men's shadows or that all we're worth is looks over brains? How the fuck have some women been made to crave rape? Are you playing fucking devil's advocate or would you actually prefer to keep living in a man's world? You put the orange idiot in charge AGAIN. He only cares for himself and maybe other white cis men. That's it. Any woman that voted for him should be ashamed and I mean that.
-a herd of ants

MAGICAL GIRL SPOTLIGHT

Ada Lovelace

modern computer maker, badass and fought against sexist mathematical field

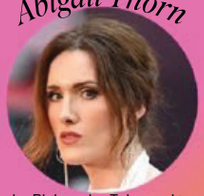
Angela Davis

Outspoken black activist that stands for justice, even if that means being threatened death row. Revolutionary that you MUST respect if you call yourself a leftist.

Alex Consani

The first trans model to win Model of the Year and youngest, started modeling at 12 years old.

Abigail Thorn



aka Philosophy Tube, making leftist theory accessible and cunty. Also an awesome actress and playwright

Rosalind Franklin

The actual discoverer of the double helix, but the achievement was stolen and then attributed to Watson and Crick. They stole the pictures from her lab

Audre Lorde

A prominent Black lesbian poet

Christine Jorgensen

Pioneering actress and the first woman to medically transition, outspoken activist for transgenderism

Ching Shih

A badass pirate who at one point went up against the East India Company, the Portuguese Empire, and the Great Qing and retired happily after scaring the shit out of them with her power

E Pauline Johnson

a Mohawk woman who helped define Canadian literature and poetry and performed in front of large crowds in traditional Mohawk garb, celebrating her heritage at a time where it was incredibly persecuted

Mae Jemison

SCIENTIST, ASTRONAUT, AND DANCER!! FIRST BLACK WOMAN IN SPACE AND LEAD OF HER MISSION

Eartha Kitt

A famous singer who when invited to the White House, called out the atrocities of the Vietnam War to the face of LBJ and First Lady Johnson. This put her on the watchlist, but she never regretted using her voice to stand up for what was right.

Frida Kahlo

Bitchy bisexual Mexican artist, she just like me. Defined an era of art and when her evil fuck ass husband cheated on her, she had sex with the women and actually satisfied them yassss.She suffered from chronic pain throughout her life, which some of her art touchingly portrays. An inspiration in so many ways!

Greta Thunberg

From a young age, she fought for better environmental policy worldwide. As she grew up, she realized the problem itself was capitalism and imperialism, and that bargaining with the powers that be isn't a viable strategy. Now you can find her on the frontline of pro-Palestinian movement.

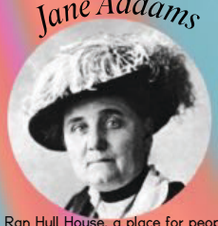
Hedy Lamarr

she is a fab scientist, actress and model that created wifi and bluetooth

Lynn Yaeger

Renowned fashion critic who in no way adheres to any fickle conceptions of "trendiness." Her style is timeless and unique, she says "Truly wacky style doesn't date, so all those worries about wrinkles leave you blissfully unaffected."

Jane Addams



Ran Hull House, a place for people facing abject poverty to find shelter and a hot meal. She also lived with her female partner for decades, you could say they were roommates.

Joan of Arc

Alexa's first crush, was literally out there with divine visions and kicked British peoples' asses as a white french girl.

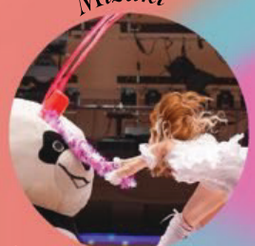
Josephine Baker

A well-known Black jazz singer who defied segregation and was proudly bisexual

Lozen

member of the Chinenne Chiricahua Apache tribe where she led successful wars against colonizers, promised to never marry and HELP DELIVERED A BABY DURING A BATTLE!!

Mizuki



a pro wrestler who wears cutie lolita outfits while fighting omg <3

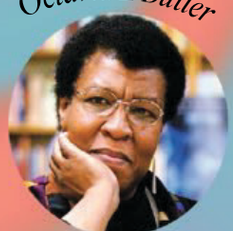
Sha'Carri Richardson

an American track and field sprinter who takes home the gold and is a record setter the did I mention this Aries born in 2000 ran the 100m in 10.65 seconds in 2023? Fastest woman IN THE WORLD Best part: she runs with long cunty acrylics n vibrant gorgalicious lace fronts, intricate braids and of course the occasional fro. (and for all yall who dont know, these braids *especially* add WEIGHT, interpret that info as you will :))

Susan Kare

contributed interface elements and typefaces for the first Apple Macintosh personal computer

Octavia E Butler

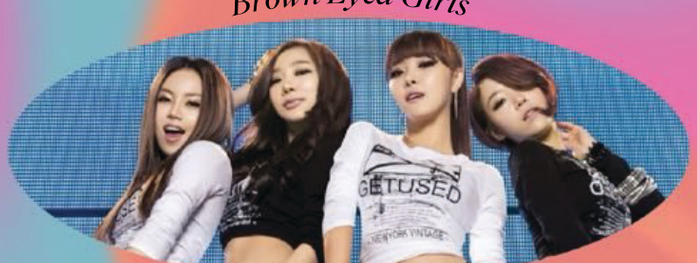


Was a fantastic sci-fi, afrofuturist feminist writer. Just two among her many books, Parable of the Sower and Parable of the Talents provide a fascinating potential future of America. The books acquired a cult following for the accuracy of events yet to transpire when the books were written, and a religion that worships Change as God.

Yaa Asantewaa

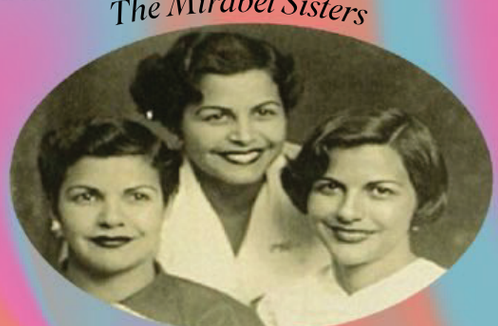
Leading the Ashantis in the War the Golden Stool against the British, defending the independence of Ghana

Brown Eyed Girls



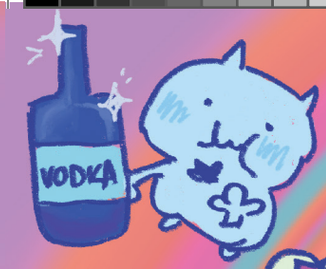
Best kpop group (imho), superior music. Standout songs: LOVE, Abracadabra, Warm Hole (literally about vaginas, not my fave song though), Sign, My Style, Wonder Woman. Music videos feature blatant displays of lesbianism and extreme queerness.

The Mirabel Sisters



Dominican republic sisters who hosted illegal radio broadcasts abt the then dictator and news reports, got assassinated for about to leak hierarchical power (it was published anyways <3)

MAGICAL PLAYLIST



Miki Matsubara Mayonaka no Door/Stay With Me
bugcried GOT UR NUMBER (v2)
Reol Loading...
Macross 82-99 Horsey
kitty ray Last Minute
Magdalena Bay You Lose!
Chappell Roan HOT TO GO!
Chappell Roan Femininomenon
flowerovlove a girl like me
hemlocke springs girlfriend
Ashnikko Cheerleader
MARINA Bubblegum Bitch
Cults Gilded Lily
Masami Okui Rondo Revolution
Unknown The sunlit garden
Charli XCX claws
Flower Face If I Beg You
Paris Paloma boys, bugs and men
girl in red Body And Mind
Bjork Big Time Sensuality
Sophie Vyzee
M.I.A. Bamboo Banga
Imogen Heap Headlock
Boa Duvet
Grimes Realiti
DJ Sabrina the Teenage DJ Not Your Fault
Pearly Drops Bloom for me
FKA Twigs Eusexua
Cocteau Twins Pandora (For Cindy)
Siouxsie and the Banshees Spellbound
Switchblade Symphony Gutter Glitter
Kip Tyler She's My Witch
Ado ODO
Sevdaliza Human
Yubin Lady
Magdalena Bay Mercurial World
UFO f5ve
Aurora Winter Bird
STRFKR JULIUS
Bjork Hidden Place
Fishbuns Kibun
Eatheater Crushing
The Gits Second Skin
Weezer I Just Threw Out the Love of My Dreams
Pussy Riot et al. 1312
Portishead Sour Times
La Femme Divine Creature
Twin Tribes Cauldron of Thorns
Folk Uke Motherfucker Got Fucked Up Shinhoko Hirata
Heartbeat, Heartbreak
PRMBATH if You Try To Talk To Me
Masataka Matsutoya LOVERS PARADISE

Alice Phoebe Lou Witches
Ethel Cain Gibson Girl
Glass Spells Hechizos
Nuovo Testamento Searcher
Backxwash Spells
Janelle Monae Electric Lady
Moor Mother UMZANSI
Ichiko Aoba Ikinokori Bokura
Chelsea Grin Cheyne Stokes
Fievel Is Glauque Decoy
Hellokittybalahcurri babyMINT
deee-lite Groove is in the Heart
LOVEBITES DYSTOPIA SYMPHONY
Passion Pit Carried Away
100 gecs et al. ringtone (remix)
RYUWAVE UNLIMITED UNIVERSE
Kero Kero Bonito Well Rested
Nightcord at 25:00 IDSMILE
Brown Eyed Girls LOVE
Hi-Fi Set Sukoshidake Mawarimichi
Masayoshi Takanaka NIGHTS
Minnie Riperton Les Fleurs
SOPHIE Immaterial
Alice Longyu Gao Hello Kitty
Jingfei The Sunset Playhouse
Mya My Love is Like...Wo
Spill Tab CREME BRULEE!
Rina Sawayama Paradisin'
Mitski Brand New City
Janet Jackson If
Nova Twins Athena
Slotface Nancy Drew

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FRONT COVER BY: ALEXA CRUZ ABARCA
BACK COVER BY: EVEWASFRAMED
FIND YOUR BOOB BY: ALEXA CRUZ ABARCA

magical girl omfg if we do this again 12.indd 39 1/10/2025 3:05:20 PM